dissent

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VODKA: COMMODITY NUMBER ONE IN THE SOVIET UNION

A. Krasikov

ISRAEL: AFTER THE BEGIN VICTORY

Menahem Brinker, Irving Howe

How Our Hospitals Got on Welfare
Toby Cohen

Problems & Paradoxes in the Third World
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Panthers & Bulldogs Revisited
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Union Democracy & the Sadlowski Campaign
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Culture & Politics in the Sixties
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Reza Baraheni

The Crowned Cannibals

Reza Baraheni, born in Iran in 1935, is one of the leading modern poets of his country. In 1973 he was kidnapped by SAVAK, the secret police of Iran. During the 102 days of his imprisonment, he was repeatedly tortured and beaten to make him admit to political "treason." He was released in December of that year through the efforts of European and American writers and now lives as an exile in the United States.

The poems that appear below, all touching in one way or another on his traumatic experience with SAVAK, are taken from his recently published book, The Crowned Cannibals, *copyright © 1976, 1977 by Reza Baraheni, a powerful and impassioned attack on the tyranny of the Shah and the bestial methods used by the Shah's agents against Iranian dissidents. As E. L. Doctorow writes in his introduction to the book, "Baraheni is chronicler of his nation's torture industry, and poet of his nation's secret police force." We are grateful to Random House/Vintage Books for permission to print these poems.* — Eds.

I Used to Be Innocent

And then I used to be so innocent
With the nightingales at my elbow
And the springs snapping their fingers
At the end of my arms
And an entire school of birds climbed above my shoulders

And there were women too
With armpits full of clusters of golden grapes
And with round mouths
Who blew their songs into the reeds of my bones
Making me sing and whirl
Round all the deserts of the East
Planting white villages at every rise and fall of my feet
And thoughts appeared in my mind
As fresh and warm as the downy heads of newly born infants

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Let me tell you my friend
I used to be innocent
Like a camel's face
Masticating his turpentine
And not even thinking for a second of his neck
Reflected in the sun on the dunes of the desert
And let me add that I used to be innocent
As racemes of stars, luminous, and almost eloquent
Cluttered on a couple of oases in an oriental night

Imagine bread baking and rising like rivers swelling
Imagine grapes squeezed into wine by sweating, female heels
Imagine the ritual of drumming fingertips
On a man's vertebrae
Imagine throwing yourself on the grass and saying,
Take me
Imagine

I used to be innocent

What happened on a September day in 1973
Is already an old story
But imagine a sieve, or rather, a screen
Placed in front of your memories
And everything passing through it
The faces of all men and women you loved
The children you saw and spoke with
The grass on which you slept
The stars you watched, the camels you rode
The rabbits you followed
Imagine all of them and other memories
Passing through the screen
And changing and changing, constantly changing
And becoming things which are unrecognizable
Imagine all love and beauty kept behind that screen
Or memories distorted, standing upside down
Or swollen like decomposing flesh
Imagine a hell you recognize to have been your personal paradise
Imagine

I used to be innocent □

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The Mask of the Dictator

Last night my general came to see me
We agreed on everything
He said the number I had given him was correct
I told him the number he had given me was also correct
I asked the general about his wife
He told me she was always ready
I thanked him
His wife tells me about the general's bed habits
We laugh till we come together

The general stood at attention
I told him to undress
He did like an obedient soldier
Naked, he stood like a hairy pig
I told him to turn around
His hanging buttocks sneered like a double chin
I invited him to play checkers with me
I had all my ribbons, medals, stars and crowns on
The general's shoulders were naked
When I won I told him to get up and fart
He hunched up his shoulders
He squeezed his bowels
He pressed the weight of his crimes on his rectum
He failed
"Your Majesty, I don't have one this time
Forgive me, Your Majesty!"
I have never forgiven anyone
I have read and unread the books of my enemies
They are dead
I am depressed like a big bug that cannot walk
"General! Come and poke your nose into my ass!"
I want him to see the galaxies there
With his myopic eyes
But half-dictators have no vision
I throw him out
Ring the bell
And ask for my naked cabinet to walk in
When the birds sing outside
I ask all of them to speak at once
"Not less than a hundred words in a second, you sons of bitches!"

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They chatter on things that don't matter
Everyone fails nowadays
Where are the old ways
When rhymes flowed like melted honey
When I gave my eunuchs and poets
tons and tons of money?

I stand by the mirror
My country is a large mirror
It shows only me, only me
The people, the filthy people, have departed
I am past, present and future
Bury me standing, if you must
Bury me standing, if you must □

The Mask of the Exile

I want to get up and go see her again
The woman as familiar as the desert
She sits there by the window
Her hands smelling of turnips and the sun
The sun that makes her old,
The sun that kills her
The sun that forgets her

Her pygmy eyes know the meaning of exile
She knows the corridors of immigration by heart
Cars and camels and flies pass
But no flowers pass
She knows the meaning of her hands
Throttled by the veins on her wrists
Her share is a wrinkled heart
Her feet are weightless
Like empty slippers
Her womb is a balloon
Deflated, its sons gone out

What am I doing here?
She sits there, a year before or after her death
A year before or after her funeral
Round like the word Orient
Round like the O in the word or the world
I want to get up and go see her again □

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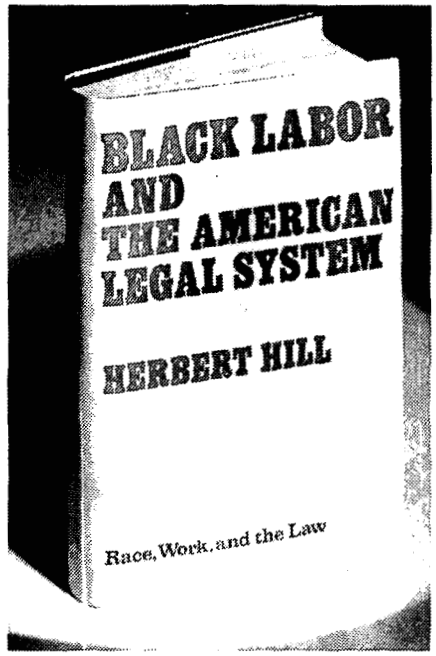

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DISSENT is a journal devoted to radical ideas and the values of socialism and democracy. It seeks to serve as a forum for writers devoted to these ideas and values, while also welcoming a wide variety of other opinions. Each writer speaks for himself; there is no effort made to exact editorial consensus or uniformity.

dissent

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At the Labor Department . . .

It took members of the United Mine Workers three bitter years to win the battle of democracy in their union, and then only after their leader had been murdered by union officials in power. In those terrible times, they appealed for help, urgently and often, to the Labor Department. Their experience was summed up in 1974 by the murdered reform leader's son, Joseph Chip Yablonski, who served as attorney first for the reformers and then for the union after the reform victory. In a brief to the U.S. Supreme Court in a union democracy case, he wrote:

The struggle by UMWA members to overturn tyranny in their union was a lonely and difficult one in part because of apathy and indifference, if not outright prejudice against them, by officials within the United States Department of Labor. . . . Too often, unior reformers have found the Department of Labor allied with the union incumbents against their interests.

from *The Rights of Union Members*

"THE RIGHTS OF UNION MEMBERS",

a handbook on internal union democracy is being published in serial form by the Association for Union Democracy. The third installment is now available in *Union Democracy Review No. 11*. When all installments have been printed, the completed handbook will be published as a paperback.

Written especially for active unionists, the handbook is nevertheless of interest to the general reader concerned with labor affairs. It discusses the practical effect of the Landrum-Griffin Act on basic democratic rights and on union elections. It assesses the role of the U.S. Department of Labor as an enforcement agency. It reviews some of the landmark court cases affecting union democracy.

The first two installments dealt with the requirements of federal law for a Bill of Rights for union members and with internal union procedures for fair elections. The latest installment aims to guide union members in processing election appeals to the Labor Department.

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The "Animals" & the Moralists

New York After the Summer Looting

The looting that took place during the power blackout in New York last July showed what should never have been forgotten. It showed that the social order in America contains deep segments of disaffection; that despite the rhetoric and occasional achievements of the last few decades, large numbers of blacks continue to lead a miserable, deprived existence; that the seeming social quiet of the last few years can easily be broken by accident or provocation. All the neoconservative talk about our society being essentially well-ordered and healthy turns out to be the merest ideology—and the worst kind: that of people who think they have risen above ideology.

After the looting a tide of moralistic bilge swept across the city. Our local policemen were ranting about "the animals" to the reporters of the unspeakable *New York Post* (by comparison to which the *Daily News* reads like Albert Schweitzer). Or for a minimum of 75 ¢ you could get the same wisdom from a taxi driver: "those animals, they don't want to work, they're just bums etc." The sophisticated version of this response came from ex-liberals deploring the breakdown of morality. "Poverty and unemployment," they kept saying, "don't excuse antisocial behavior." Well, of course they don't *excuse* it. The question is, whether they *explain* it, wholly or in part.

If anyone needed convincing once more that moralism can often veil meanness, the response to July 13 should prove sufficient. The social nastiness, the sly implicit racism, the middle-class selfishness that is a major heritage of the Nixon years—this had found, just a few days earlier, a deplorable repetition in Jimmy Carter's reflections regarding abortions for the poor: that life *is* sometimes "unfair" and the government can't undertake to remedy that unfairness.

Intellectuals peddle similar wisdom. There is much talk about "the limits of social policy"—and you know who's most likely to feel those limits. An editor of the *Public Interest*, Irving Kristol, has come out for cutting social welfare programs: his sense of timing is exquisite. "The philanthropic tradition," he says, "has shaped New York City politics in such a way as to encourage fiscal recklessness." (Quoted, *Jewish Week*, July 16, 1977).

And then there are—let's call them—the neorealists, those who are "tired of bleeding hearts." What's a bleeding heart? A heart that's horrified at the conditions in the jails where thousands of alleged looters were held. It does not seem to matter to the neorealists that some, or many, of the people in the jails might be innocent; that the accused are presumed to be innocent until proven guilty; or that even the guilty have rights under a document known as the Constitution. Among the local commentators only Murray Kempton had the sense to remark that "want of sympathy for these people [the alleged looters packed into stinking, unsanitary jails] in no way exempts us from the normal commands of decency in their treatment."

The looting itself is, of course, destructive. For the minority groups themselves, it is utterly self-destructive. For the small shopkeepers victimized by looters, one feels sympathy and hopes for quick governmental help. But people who try to *think* about such matters must also keep certain facts clear:

- Unemployment among black youth, in some areas of the city, runs to more than 50 percent. Housing remains wretched. Jobs are scarce. Poverty persists. Over the decades, as a legacy of

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neglect and callousness, there has grown up a social demoralization strongly alloyed with pathology.

Does all this "excuse" the looting? No. But the problem is neither to excuse nor celebrate; it is to understand and then, if possible, to act.

The only thing I have read on the events of July 13 that begins to make sense is a piece by Russell Baker in the *Times*:

> if [like President Carter] you are going to preach that unfairness is inescapable for some, good sense suggests that you also accept the inevitability of beastly behavior by people who have to carry the burden. Unless you are a Dickens heroine, it becomes insufferable after a while constantly having all the unfairness left on your doorstep while the Mayfair swells are eating Scotch salmon, weekending in the Hamptons, and enjoying exclusive membership in the Abortion Club.
>
> You may not take to the streets with torch and shotgun, but you are likely to find your eyes going glassy when the professor, or the President, talks about social obligations. If the lights go out on a steamy summer night – well, life is unfair, isn't it?

It also seems to be true that the black community is floundering, without a sufficiently strong political or moral leadership such as it had in the 1960s, especially before the assassination of Martin Luther King. Such a leadership would, one supposes, speak to its people in terms somewhat like these: "We understand the sources of your desperation. We share your indignation at the sufferings to which we are subjected. Still, we say to you that the path of crime can only do our people harm. Looting does not create black pride or political strength; it creates demoralization and division. Looting is not a sign of our common effort; it signifies our weakness. Looting, and burning down our dwelling places, will not bring us allies; it will only contribute to the pitiful desolation of our neighborhoods; and it will only intensify the contempt in which we are held by people who ought to be working with us."

A few days after the looting, an important black newspaper published in New York, the *Amsterdam News*, did appear with an editorial not very different from the above imagined message—and that is encouraging. But no newspaper can take the place of an active leadership immediately present at emergencies. And it is of course a question whether any leadership could now reach the more deeply alienated segments of black youth.

That, of course, is the business of the blacks. The business of society at large is to do something about the social conditions that underlie such outbreaks of desperation we saw on July 13. "Oh no," interrupt some terribly sophisticated voices, "you don't really want to bring up all that stuff again about social reform as the answer to violence."

BEFORE CONFRONTING the question directly, let us ask in turn: what else? what do the cynics and skeptics propose instead? that we send Irving Kristol to 125th Street to preach fiscal responsibility? Or if that fails, as seems rather probable, that we set up more jails, hand out tougher sentences, create thicker walls around the ghettos?

July 13 is said to have cost several hundred million dollars. Consider how many jobs for black youths in New York City could have been created with that kind of money! If we do not expend resources for social reform, the whole society will pay through endless "hidden" and visible costs—from pathology to waste to violence.

No sensible person really supposes that creating jobs for black youth will immediately or totally solve the problems of racial tension or bring social health to the ghetto streets. Obviously not, for by now there is such an accumulation of malaise and despair that nothing can dissolve it overnight. Trouble will remain, even if we were to do what we should and can do about poverty and unemployment. But if there were a policy of serious and sustained help and rehabilitation for the black poor; if even a modest fraction of the resources this country wastes on everything from warfare to advertising were directed toward the difficulties that fester in our cities, then at least *the foundations for social rebuilding could be created.*

These ideas are not really so complicated, though carrying them out might be. President Carter, in an interview with black broadcasters a week after the looting, said some of the same things. But what is so exasperating is that while he says the right things, he does not do them. Domestically, the Carter administration has thus far been decidedly conservative and timid, caught up with the old shibboleths of a balanced budget.

WE PERSIST in "all that stuff" about social reform and social change. Only action by the society at large—which in practice means employing the resources of the federal government—can provide a start. Otherwise, there will be darker days and more looting. And worse still.

I. H.□

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Brendan Sexton

Progressive Stirrings in the American Unions

The anomaly of the day is that the opponents of trade unions are seeking to restrain the economic and political activities of unions at a time when their growth has been halted. Many individual unions are shrinking in size and the membership of the total movement has declined.

—Solomon Barkin, *The Decline of the Labor Movement*, Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions, 1961

This report [is] about an important American phenomenon, the phenomenon of a great social institution remaining virtually unmoving on a plateau while society all around it keeps growing and changing. It might be more correct to say that unions have existed on two plateaus—a plateau of membership and a plateau of ideas.

—Clark Kerr, President, University of California, Foreword to *The Decline of the Labor Movement*

Since Barkin and Kerr had their say in 1961, union membership has increased by nearly 5 million. In most recent years, unions have been organizing new workers at an annual rate of about 250,000 and the 22 million Americans now belonging to unions constitute a record high. In absolute terms, unions have done rather well. In relative terms, they have just about held their own. That is, in 1961, 22.3 percent of the total labor force were in unions; by 1974, that figure was 21.6 percent—not a substantial loss considering the prevalence of Nixonism, and the growth of the labor force with which unions had to keep pace.[1]

Nailing the myth of labor's demise is one thing, but that myth dies hard, probably because so many people want so fervently to believe it. Still, the weaknesses of labor are not to be dismissed, especially with regard to the near future. They are real. But considering the hostility of most employers and much of middle-class America, the mere survival of a still-powerful union movement is in itself remarkable.

The failure of labor to keep pace with growth in the work force is based to some extent on the internal factors its critics harp on. Corruption is hardly at issue; leadership is. Labor leaders need to be strong, imaginative, resourceful, persuasive enough to "capture the hearts and minds of men," as Walter Reuther said endlessly. These are, to say the least, hard jobs to fill.

Related to the internal factors, but vastly more significant, are the sectoral and geographic changes in the labor market that alter labor's base of operation. All are related to politics and to laws that favor employers and tie labor's hands.

Growth in manufacturing employment, labor's traditional stronghold, has slowed down. Factories inexorably move from city to suburb and from the unionized North to the open-shop South. Only among government workers has the growth in the service sector nearly been matched by union organization. The AFL-CIO base in the construction industry is being massively eroded.[2] The nation is almost saturated with the kind of

[1] In the *Directory of National Unions and Employees Associations*, published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the U.S. Department of Labor, rather elaborate reports of union membership, its growth or decline, industrial and geographic distribution, etc., normally may be found. An updated, current edition of the *Directory* was to have been published in May 1977, but had not appeared at the time this was written. Most of the statistical material used in this piece, then, is rather dated, since it came mainly from that source. Elsewhere, however, in publications issuing from the same source as the *Directory*, some material of this kind has been printed, and from those sources I have concluded that the membership statistics used in this piece continue to be essentially accurate.

[2] Ironically, the building trades unions, so badly shattered as a result of recent shifts in government and public policy, were early allies of Richard Nixon and Gerald Ford. They helped prod George Meany as he battered George McGovern during the 1972 presidential election. They went to Nixon even though he had suspended the operation of the Davis-Bacon Act and thus opened the door for entry of nonunion builders into the federal contracts arena though they previously had been effectively excluded by the operation of that act. Ten years ago nonunion contractors held an estimated 20 percent of the dollar volume of government-supported construction work, but now that share has risen to over 50 percent. As a result, unionized construction workers have suffered greater unemployment than their nonunion counterparts. In New York City more than two-thirds of the union work force is unemployed, and the AFL-CIO Building Trades Department set the figure at 27 percent nationally for the month of January 1977.

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buildings union workers construct—high-rise, public and private institutions—as well as super highways. The need for new schools, colleges, hospitals, mental institutions, and highways has dried up, and building trades unions have never been strong in those places where construction now continues.

AFL-CIO craft-union leadership has apparently not seen that the erosion of its base can have catastrophic organizational consequences in coming decades. One day, perhaps, the Barkin-Kerr comments will seem prophetic. The economic and social tremors now running through the society may yet have as great an impact on labor as did the dramatic population shifts from rural to urban areas of the past 50 years. Yet, how narrowly focused much current leadership remains was highlighted at the opening of Congress, when AFL-CIO legislative chiefs gave highest priority to situs-picketing legislation in which only the building trades leadership had any real interest. Passed over then were the socially far more important and politically more popular AFL-CIO proposals to increase minimum wages and strengthen the protection provided under federal labor law to workers active in union-organizing drives.

Efforts to block President Carter's appointment of Paul Warnke to lead the SALT talks also seemed to get more attention from AFL-CIO leadership at that time than did the pressing social concerns of union members and unorganized workers, especially the concerns of the employed poor.

For weeks after the Congress voted to reject situs-picketing, AFL-CIO leadership seemed stunned. They lapsed into silence and inaction. Some political ground was later reclaimed, and in negotiations with the White House presidential support was won for modified AFL-CIO proposals to raise minimum wages and reform the federal labor laws. In the negotiations with the White House, Clarence Mitchell, NAACP's chief advocate in Washington, apparently took the lead. Like many other black leaders, Mitchell sees the connection between low wages, low levels of union organization, and the pervasiveness of poverty among full-time workers in the South where black people remain concentrated. Mitchell, on the other hand, would be listed among those least likely to lead a charge up Capitol Hill in support of any effort to advance the interests of the building trades unions.

A NUMBER of the more outspoken among the new arrivals at the top level of labor leadership favor intensification of activities that will win and keep allies among civil rights and liberal political groups with whom labor was allied prior to the breakup that occurred during George McGovern's campaign.

Some AFL-CIO leaders persist in the view that organizing the unorganized is of no importance. It follows that they attach no importance to the need for labor-law reforms to aid union organizing drives. It is at this group that some of the new arrivals on the labor scene have aimed their sharpest criticism, and it is perhaps in response to these criticisms that George Meany has lately begun to espouse the cause of organizing the unorganized.

Speaking before a meeting of AFL-CIO union legislative aides called to mobilize support for the Federation's revised legislative program, Meany said, "It is not enough for the United States to advocate human rights in the Soviet Union and Chile, while the human rights of American workers in Roanoke Rapids and Charlotte, North Carolina, are being denied."

At the same meeting, in an apparent attempt to rouse some of his more conservative colleagues on the AFL-CIO Executive Council from their continuing torpor, Meany also harked back to the 30s when

> old-time labor leaders sort of shrugged their shoulders and said we don't need it, what do we need a Wagner Act for? We are organized. We are bargaining collectively. . . . But this was not true of the great mass of unorganized workers in the country. . . . It is to the eternal credit of the American trade union movement that they put up this fight.

These are strong words coming from a man who not long ago himself expressed some doubt about the need to organize the unorganized. They may perhaps be read as a rebuke to those leaders of the AFL-CIO who were to put situs-picketing ahead of labor-law reform.

In any event, these words will surely be welcomed by the more progressive and socially concerned persons who have recently taken over leadership of a number of the more powerful American unions.

- William Winpisinger, an avowed democratic socialist, is the newly elected president of the powerful International Association of Machinists. His outspoken criticism of AFL-CIO leaders has attracted more than usual press attention and may

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inspire others on the AFL-CIO Council to be similarly candid.

"Whimpy's" election is paralleled in significance by that of Lloyd McBride to the Steelworkers' presidency and of Douglas Fraser to the same post in the UAW. McBride, though opposed by Ed Sadlowski, who was favored by many on the democratic left, is nonetheless likely to be counted among the progressives in the AFL-CIO. His running mate, elected to the union's second highest post, was Lynn Williams, long-time active member of Canada's socialist New Democratic party. People who know McBride well describe him as a man with strong commitments to old-fashioned trade-union ethics and morality who holds a more progressive view of the union's role than others who preceded him in office.

• Douglas Fraser of the UAW is a special person to me. When I first met him, he was president of UAW's DeSoto Local 227, a man so full of good spirits and unionism that he could hardly wait to get from the parking lot to his job when he came to work each morning. He would sometimes run the distance, he told me, so eager was he to see the people with whom he shared the day. Vital, warm, always good-humored, Fraser is probably also the intellectual peer of anyone in public life, even of his predecessor, Leonard Woodcock, a man of exceptional accomplishment.

For a period of time, Fraser was a supporter of the union's left wing and was in fact the left-wing candidate for president of the Michigan CIO, in contest with Gus Scholle, a leading supporter of Reuther's. As chairman of the CIO election committee, I did him the favor of counting him out in that election. Later, he, Leonard Woodcock, Jack Conway, and I served together for a time on Reuther's staff. Then and now Fraser has been an unshakable advocate of the socially most advanced UAW policies—encouragement of rank-and-file participation, racial and sexual equality, and liberal social reform. He is a vigorous and persuasive advocate who somehow ends even the sharpest debates without having made any enemies. In public affect, Fraser rather resembles Phil Murray, Steelworker and later CIO president. Products of the same culture—Scottish born, Roman Catholics—both Fraser and Murray (under whom I worked in Steel) have been steadfast in support of working-class interests but at the same time rather courtly and good-tempered.

In all my years of public life I have known no one so widely regarded with respect and affection. Following Walter Reuther's sad death, Fraser narrowly lost a bid for the UAW's top spot. Now, if reelected, he will be able to serve about seven years.

The unions led by McBride, Winpisinger, and Fraser have a combined membership of about 3.5 million, a total greater than the 3 million said to be included in the building trade unions now represented on the AFL-CIO Executive Council. Others are likely to join them on many policy issues in an effort to broaden labor's perspectives. Jerry Wurf, the abrasive but brilliant and gutsy president of AFSCME (the huge, rapidly growing union of local and state public employees), has repeatedly voiced sharp criticism of AFL-CIO leadership. Glen Watts of the Communication Workers and leaders of electrical, hospital, service, printing trades, apparel, and other unions are likely to sympathize with them much of the time.

THIS NEW LEADERSHIP may help shift labor's concerns to larger priorities. About the building-trades sponsored and AFL-CIO favored situs-picketing bill, Winpisinger said, "putting the construction picketing bill ahead of everything else in our program was certainly an upside-down priority." Even the relatively reserved Sol Chaikin, president of the ILGWU, described building trades conduct in this case as "arrogant," and Albert Zack, George Meany's chief publicist, called the move "erroneous strategy."

Labor's most acute legislative needs are improved miminum wage, and changes in the basic labor laws. These laws are designed to protect labor's right to organize but are now more often used to postpone and delay action on unfair labor practice charges—to delay for years the reinstatement of workers discharged for union activity, postpone collective-bargaining elections endlessly, tie up unions in court even when they have won government-conducted elections. In short, they subvert all union organizing efforts.

Another die-hard myth about labor is that employers now accept unions. They do, of course, when faced with no alternative. But they fight if they think they can win, and use whatever tactics they can get away with (including violence and murder). Employers' growing antiunion activity is easily inferred from the stunning multiplication of unfair labor practice charges formally carried to the National Labor Relations Board. In 1937 (when CIO organizing drives were at their peak and the Wagner Act was in full flower) about 3,000 such

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cases were filed. Twenty years later, the number had risen to a little over 5,000. By 1975 the figure accelerated to a high of about 30,000. Because of delays attributable in large part to Nixon appointees both at the Board and in the federal courts, more than 14,000 cases were pending before the Board at the end of 1975.[3]

Nowhere else in law is the charge that "justice delayed is justice denied" more apt. It does neither the worker nor the union much good if a worker discharged for union activity is required to wait two, three, even four years before reinstatement. Likewise, if a petition for a union election can be delayed for months, employers can use the time to repress, subvert, or sometimes buy out the union effort.

Under the law a company such as J.P. Stevens, in the words of *Village Voice* reporter Judith Coburn, may discover "a simple fact: If you're willing to pay millions in fines and legal fees, you can thumb your nose at unions, the courts and the government." This company's conduct is so extreme, says Coburn, "as to raise the grim possibility that even in 1977 a corporation in this country might be guilty of massive injustice to nearly 50,000 workers and still be unbeatable."

Failure to sense the desperate need for legislative remedies in such situations might be expected from men who doubt the importance of organization. Leaders of craft unions are accustomed to bargaining in local markets, where wages and prices can normally be set without a competition from outside. After all, you can't build a New York City school using cheap labor in North Carolina, so building tradesmen need not worry about low-wage workers elsewhere. (They might wonder, however, why so much building is going on in open-shop areas.) If you work in textiles, however, or clothing, or increasingly in steel, rubber, auto, glass, etc., you may find in the current period that your job is being spirited away to the hills where workers earn much less and may produce more. The need to organize these unorganized workers then becomes pressing.

Leaders whose central concern has been with local labor markets might be expected for a time to miss the importance of organizing. The leaders of unions whose members must compete in national and international markets are driven to organize those markets where low wages and speedup may enable employers to produce materials at prices the organized shops cannot match. At stake is the effort to narrow wage differentials that may run as high as $100 a week. Last year, for instance, weekly earnings for manufacturing workers averaged about $135 in North Carolina, $191 in New York, $223 in Ohio, and $250 in Michigan.

Much of this differential may be accounted for by the differing industrial mix—the South with highly concentrated textiles and apparel, while Michigan and Ohio benefit from the richer mix of steel, rubber, auto. Still, the southern mix increasingly includes metal trades, chemicals, building materials, and others, with textiles making up about 20 percent of the total. So wages, as well as industry differences, count.

In the ten-year period prior to 1974, according to the *New York Times,* New York State alone lost more than 210,000 manufacturing jobs, while states in the so-called right-to-work bloc gained more than 1.5 million. In New York, more than 36 percent of all workers belong to unions, whereas in North Carolina, where so many fleeing jobs wind up, only about 7.7 percent belong. In the most highly unionized of all the "right-to-work" states—Iowa and Alabama—union membership of just over 20 percent of the labor force is 6 percent below the national average.

If union membership in North Carolina is brought up to the national average, about 250,000 will be added to union rolls, and the state will be politically transformed.

Average wage increases of about $3.00 an hour were won by the General Motors workers of Monroe, Louisiana, after they voted to join the UAW. No such adjustments could possibly result from the unionization of the much poorer textile industry, but significant gains can be expected. Perhaps as many as 600,000 textile workers labor in unorganized southern textile mills, or about 90 percent of the total. A union upsurge in textiles is likely to unloosen new political and social dynamics that may tip the scales against many reactionary southern politicians who continue to win elections in unorganized industrial communities.

For this reason, some unionists look upon the emergence of a new and more dynamic leadership

[3] Reports of the number of unfair labor practice charges are published annually in the *Handbook of Labor Statistics,* also published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the U.S. Department of Labor. Other materials in this article reporting average wages, numbers of workers in the textile industry, etc., are likewise taken from that source.

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in the apparel unions as at least equal in importance to the elections in the metal workers unions previously mentioned. Murray Findlay, Jack Sheinkman, and Sol Stettin of the Amalgamated and Textile unions last year negotiated the creation of the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union, now powerful enough to challenge J.P. Stevens and, let us hope, following that, other employers in the southern textile and clothing industries.

ACTWU now has signed a majority of workers at 17 J.P. Stevens locations and has put before the NLRB demands that it be certified as bargaining agent at those places. With support from the Industrial Union and Organizing Departments of the AFL-CIO, ACTWU has mounted active campaigns at all J.P. Stevens locations. The organizers at work in this campaign—young, idealistic, imaginative—resemble those of the 1930s more than any I have recently seen.

Despite southern employer resistance to unions, new elements in the South make optimism about the success of unionism more than a Pollyannaish wish. A few examples:

— As a result of the civil rights struggle, and the consequent steady rise in the number of black voters, liberal politics has now won a foothold here and there in the South.

— Despite the recent setback of Atlanta's sanitation men, liberal politicians sometimes help public worker unions to grow. In Florida, for example, AFSCME has recently made rather dramatic gains, and these follow the rapid growth of teacher unionism in the state.

— Rather large numbers of black workers are now employed in southern industries, and they tend to rally quickly and strongly to union organizing appeals.

— Reverberations from the women's movement are being felt even in the South, and especially in the textile industry, where close to half of all workers are female and relatively few work above the lowest rungs of the occupational ladder.

It is in the southern mill towns—where I have spent some time recently—that the American union movement may be seen at its best—trying to organize exploited, defenseless, powerless workers of whose existence most of the rest of us are not even aware. It is here, rather than at the AFL-CIO building on 16th Street in Washington, D.C., that the mettle of labor unionism is being tested. □

Macolm Reid

Canadian Socialists, Politics in Quebec

When I was small I lived in Ottawa. My father worked for the Canadian government. And I suppose that is what Ottawa evokes for the foreign reader. It is Canberra or Kuala Lumpur, Commonwealth Capital, with parliamentary politics and green grass, with the real life of the country, the lively and identifying life, lived elsewhere. In Montreal cafés, perhaps, or in the bush, the Arctic.

But it happens that Ottawa was a good place for growing up to awareness of the French-English conflict in Canada, which is now what seems lively and identifying about the country. The city had been a lumbering town. It was settled by, among others, the extremes of the Canadian ethnic tension, puritanical Irish and Scottish Protestants, and Catholic French-Canadians. It was located on the Ottawa River, which is the border between Quebec and Ontario.

The streetcar I took to go downtown always went through a big French-Canadian parish called St-François-d'Assise. I remember feelings of both fascination and shrinking-away as I watched the houses turn into slums and drew warmth from the oblique sunlight on the tiers of steps up to the church doors. The relationship of my English suburb to this French poverty was not felt as pure guilt or pure hatred, as it would likely have been in Montreal. Here in Ottawa, the French were not the majority, merely the largest minority, about a third of the population, as in Canada as a whole.

Yet there was a disdain for the French that was standard in the English Canada of my childhood, during the '50s. A decade and a half of French-Canadian self-assertion has rendered this raw disdain somewhat quaint, but oddly, as I sit down to write, I have in hand two just-found survivals of it. One is on the high road of constitutional ideology. It is the conservative Toronto historian Donald Creighton, in *Maclean's*, Canada's news magazine:

> For 33 years, ever since Maurice Duplessis had regained power in 1944, Quebec has been playing the politics of blackmail. . . . English Canada acted as the unsuspecting victims of intimidation have always acted: it tried to meet the politics of blackmail with the

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> politics of appeasement. This meant, in general, that the concept of French Canada as a distinct and separate community must always be allowed to prevail over the idea of Canada as a nation. Canadians were permitted to act together and identify themselves collectively only at times and in ways that French Canada condescended to approve. . . . The office of the Commissioner of Official Languages was soon crowded with a robust army of dedicated snoopers, and the commissioner himself appeared to think that his most important public duty lay in abusing and hectoring English Canadians for their neglect of a language only an infinitesimal minority would ever have occasion to use.

There is only one element missing from this petulance in order for it to correspond to the anti-French irritability I heard about me as a child. It is the dark murmur about the Catholic church. But the amazing decline of the church in Quebec has made this harder for an earnest polemic to rest upon. We find it still, though, in the other piece of antique Francophobia I happened upon as I began to write. This one takes the low road of dialect joke. The folk poet William Henry Drummond did this affectionately at the turn of the century. In the high school yearbooks since, it has not been so affectionate. This sample comes from a "Quebec Passport" published in Bells Corners, a village near Ottawa.

> Dere is one small problem. De State of Qebec don ave no hoffice no place. So if you need 'elp talk to de pries dats his job. . . . An remember, halways talk loud and wit de hands.

Even for me, there were certain unattractive notes in the French-Canadian style. I couldn't follow the urging of the liberal teacher who wanted me to listen to the state radio network's series *Fiddle Joe's Yarns,* where the Quebec village of yesteryear was sketched. When that old-time bow whined over the violin, there seeped up several frightening images from my subconscious. Religious intensity. Contentment with the past. An impenetrably close-knit ethnicity.

Disdain always has its reasons. What were the facts behind this one? They were, of course, facts of economic oppression, and this is what Creighton, the respectable conservative, avoids speaking of, all the way through his arguments. The dialect jibe, on the other hand, is implicitly based on it, all the way through. *These people are menials, they do lowly work and have about them an unshakable cheapness, of which mispronounced vowels are the reflection.* That is what the dialect material was saying. French-Canadians were low on the economic scale all across Canada. They had been farm people, and came into the industrial system, once that system spread, as unskilled workers.

In Quebec, through their concentration there, and the sharing of power within Canadian federalism, they had other classes, they had lawyers, politicians, clergy, men who ran their own provincial government and served as right-hand men to federal regimes. Sometimes they even had honorary leadership of a Canada that continued to be ruled by English-Canadian business chieftains, more and more tied to American money as the century went on. Laurier, St. Laurent, Trudeau. It was as if John D. Rockefeller had groomed Booker T. Washington for the presidency, and the custom had continued.

There was a French-Canadian territory, then, with schools, a press, cultural associations. But who controlled these institutions? Not the working people who were its majority, certainly, and not the farmers who were extolled in the teachings of the institutions. The controllers were the priests and notables of that French-Canadian elite. This class had little money and little grip on the machines and resources of the capitalist economy. Its strength flowed from the millions in the churches each Sunday, from the millions in the booths on election day. It had to rule in very tight loyalty to those who did own the economy. Its ideal of a utopia-from-the-encyclicals never came to much, but its defense of free enterprise was very real, and armed with police clubs.

And it was certain that the English minority in Quebec, containing as it did many of the most powerful businessmen in Canada, would be accorded very firm rights not to be integrated into French life. A Protestant school system, numerous middle-class municipalities on the west end of Montreal Island, a fat daily press, English radio, English TV, assurance of English in government services and the courts, miles of glittering downtown commercial development with signs hung out in English and English only. English Quebec was English Montreal. English-speaking farmers and factory managers in the outlands were incidental. This power shone so strongly that virtually all of the hundreds of thousands of postwar immigrants to the Montreal area, even when they were from such culturally close-to-French lands as Spain, Portugal, and Italy, took it for granted that they would become English-Canadians, and not French. France, until now, has sent Quebec few immigrants. Alas for French America.

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I WAS brought up in a socialist family, not an untypical thing in English Canada. We insisted on being pro-French. One of the elements of our pro-French dissent was the belief that this entente between the English industrialists and the French-Canadian ward-heelers could not go on forever. French-Canadians were becoming a proletarian people, stuffed into the factories and slums of east Montreal, Hull, Trois-Rivières, Thetford Mines, Sherbrooke, Drummondville . . . Their unions, their co-operatives, their university campuses, would give forth a new leadership. This leadership would tie their old ethnic demands to socialism. And then let the social-democratic farmers of Saskatchewan and the social-democratic coal miners of Nova Scotia jump to keep up! We were waiting for this development, catching tremors of it from writers and intellectuals even in the '50s; from Gratien Gelinas's working-class heroes, or losers, on the Montreal stage; from Fathers Dion's and O'Neill's polemics against bought elections.

We assumed, or hoped, that this would *break down* barriers between Quebec and English Canada, at any rate our English Canada, left-wing English Canada. We also assumed the Quebec move would be to the moderate left, for we did not see religion fading with any suddenness, and we perceived Quebec as basically a North American kind of society. This despite its bad standing in all the statistics—unemployment, hygiene, secondary industry . . .

But things didn't work out that way. The whole development of Quebec since 1960 can be seen as the rise of social-democratic ideas in its people. But it has not benefited the existing Canadian social-democratic movement, the New Democratic party. The NDP is the perennial third-runner in Canadian politics. In power in two of ten provinces, it is never a front-runner as its counterpart is in Britain, but never eclipsed, either, as in the United States. It would seem now to have tried every possible tack in Quebec and to have demonstrated that moderate leftism cannot be implanted there by an existing movement from the dominant nation. An interesting contrast is Scotland, where Labour is so rooted that the party could not do without its Scottish fortress. It is Labour that has to tremble contemplating the rise of autonomist feeling in the conquered nation. In Canada it is the preindustrial radicals of the Liberal party, now reactionary, who traditionally have a grip on the subject nation's voters.

The NDP in Quebec has run Michel Chartrand, legendary firebrand of a score of Catholic-union strikes against arrogant English-speaking companies. It has been led by a well-loved country lawyer, Robert Cliche. It has recruited the well-loved French-Canadian TV star Lise Payette, now the separatist consumers' minister, and the socialist constitutional expert Jacques-Yvan Morin, now education minister. It has had backing from the union movement, sympathetic coverage from the French press, leeway from the English-Canadian party, local candidates with soul, rural organizers, fighting priests, strike heroes. None of this has produced mass support, except a little in ethnic Montreal. There is only one might-have-been in this story. One man might have made all this jell. His name is René Lévesque.

WE ARE in 1958. I am riding in the car of a rather anti-French Ottawa man. *Le Devoir* has just come out with a scandal about Premier Duplessis, his ministers have been caught stealing in a stock deal. On the floor of the car are pages of this paper. Why? The man is anti-French, but he must be curious too. A nationalist French-Canadian newspaper has just nailed French Canada's often-elected nationalist tyrant. No longer is Fiddle Joe's violin the only sound from Quebec. Soon I will be going to Montreal to study. I will have to try to get inside the society, the contradiction, hinted at by these newspaper headlines I am trying to decipher.

• We are in 1959. The French TV producers are on strike at the state network. McGill students invite them to explain their case. The chief speaker is not a producer but a news commentator, an almost-bald man with some black hairs from one temple combed across the bald area to the other temple. He is René Lévesque. We listen to him. Here is the excitement I came to Montreal to find. He says that some Quebec intellectuals are talking about Maurice Duplessis as a "Negro king." By this they mean that he is indeed a leader of French Canada, but one cultivated by the English businessmen who control Quebec economically. He keeps French-Canadians incensed about provincial rights so that they will not insist upon workers' rights. This is the first time I have heard the analogy between Quebec and the colonized peoples in Africa and Asia. This will be the starting point of a book I will write on Quebec several years later. Right now it is just an intriguing thought, for something is missing. The response to colonialism, an anticolonial movement, a left.

• We are in 1960. At the NDP founding convention I am listening to an English-Canadian interviewer ask a Quebec union man why there is

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not more support for the new socialist party in Quebec. Is there not a desire for change? "Well, yes, but it is hard to persuade people that a socialist party is necessary. The new Liberal government is doing so many of the things we'd like to do." Duplessis has died, his party has been defeated. Quebec's new government is Liberal, but René Lévesque is minister of resources. Education is being secularized, hospital insurance introduced.

• We are in 1962. I am in Sherbrooke, helping with the election campaign of Gus Steenland, Belgian immigrant, Catholic trade unionist, founder of the printers' union at the newspaper I work for. He has been fired for his pains. He is running for the NDP in Sherbrooke. We drive down to a shantytown on the other side of the St. Francis River, he chats with the inhabitants. "What do you do?" "I'm a laborer," the inhabitant answers. "You're better off than me, I'm unemployed," says the candidate. I have never seen housing like these shacks, even in St-François-d'Assise back in Ottawa. We emerge from the shacktown, and I'm trying to explain the old Wobbly song about long-haired preachers promising pie in the sky, trying to make it mean something to Steenland. "The Catholic Church was always like that with the workers, too," Gus says, to my surprise, for he's a believer. He is a weird apparition in this mill town, and his pitch for New Democracy leaves eyes unresponsive, puzzled. "There is a lot of fear of Communism in Sherbrooke," he says. "There used to be a lot of Communism in the textile unions here."

There is a provincial election later, but I have nobody to work for. I watch René Lévesque sell nationalization of the private electricity companies to the church-basement crowds. In one parish hall I ask a question about the nationalizations. I'm trying to point out their limits, but Lévesque hears my English accent and figures I need reassurance. "There were sob sisters speaking of the danger of socialism when Ontario nationalized electricity, too," he says. Later I'm interviewing him for my paper, and ask again. Wouldn't *more* nationalizations be needed to truly liberate French-Canadians? His eyes narrow. "If you're talking about an all-out Soviet-type thing, we're not interested in that."

Lévesque had been asked about what he thought of the NDP in its early days. I remember reading his response to some curious friends from India in a rooming house near McGill. "I'm embarrassed," he had said, "because I'm a Liberal minister, after all. Yet it does seem to contain many progressive elements."

The NDP will never claim him. The movement that will claim him is growing steadily alongside the Liberal government. It is the separatist movement, now born, and very social-democratic, very technocratic in spirit, the first modern nationalist movement in French Canada that is not religion-steeped.

The Liberals are defeated and Lévesque's break with them comes in '68, over the national question. He emerges from a silence with his formula for Quebec. Sovereignty, coupled with economic association with Canada. A group forms around him, and soon all other separatist leaders step aside for him. The Parti Québécois is formed. Its program is socialist on the model of the West European parties. Sweden is often invoked, and a few years later Chile will be taken especially much to the Quebec heart.

• The party's progress will be steady from there, to the November 1976 victory, won with a minority vote in this several-party system. Oddly enough, however, these will also be the years when Quebec will be in the world's news because of another group, its small but imaginative extreme left. The years of Pierre Vallières's book *White Niggers of America.* The years of the terrorist kidnappings of 1970. These wholehearted adoptions of the Third World analogy for Quebec had more to offer the imagination of young Québécois, and sympathizers like me, than Lévesque's cautious separatism. But it was Lévesque who was gaining steady ground. Now the extreme leftists, to distinguish themselves from the moderate socialists in power, often discard nationalism altogether. They speak of Marx, Lenin, the *Canadian* proletariat.

• And we're in 1977, and I'm pondering my vote in the promised referendum on independence for this almost-colony where socialism has been so long getting together with national liberation. Part of me is for it. There have been too many Lauriers, St. Laurents, Trudeaus, too many mirages of French-Canadian fulfillment. It's time some promiser of nationhood delivered.

I'm dismayed, though, by the language debate. Why not some big social reforms first? Why tackle the upgrading of the French language first, the one issue that'll, surely oh surely, drive the Greeks, the Portuguese, the Italians into the English bosses' arms? I'm dismayed, too, by the ministers I never used to see at our old NDP meetings; by Jacques

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Parizeau of Quebec's school of business administration; by Rodrigue Tremblay, who made his name with a book advocating Quebec's merging, economically, anyway, with the United States; by the voices of hungry young French-Canadian business.

Indeed, the sprawl of French-speaking suburbs around the cities is the main change in the social landscape since 1960. In Quebec City, "Ste-Foy" means government technocrat, and in Montreal "Ville Brossard" means insurance executive. Such stereotypes hardly even existed in French Canada before a 1969 film comedy called *Deux Femmes en Or,* in which we saw the restless two-child families of these snowmobile camps. And the trade-union militant, the consumer organizer, once become a PQ minister, often resembles them. The PQ as the late flowering of French-Canadian social democracy? Or as the early herald of French-Canadian embourgeoisement?

The coming infights will have to determine which is the main tendency. Meanwhile, I have a litmus test to suggest. My suggestion is to the Socialist International. Why doesn't it send René Lévesque a letter noting that he has often called his party social-democratic? And raising with him the possibility of membership? □

Aborting Medicaid

• We have come a long way on the abortion issue, but we still have a long road ahead, especially with a preacher-president who is reconciled to the fact that, in this world anyhow, "there are many things in life that are not fair" and that the federal government should not try "to make these opportunities exactly equal."

The latest battle in the impassioned war over abortion has been decisively lost by the right-to-abortion group. The Supreme Court has allowed the states to prohibit the use of federal Medicaid funds for abortions sought by the indigent. The funds will continue to be available in states that do not prohibit such use.

The next battle will be fought out in Congress and in state legislatures. In Washington, following the lead of the Court and of Carter, bills are being shaped that will go beyond the Court decision and prohibit Medicaid for voluntary abortions, except where life is endangered. Until such measures become national law, the state legislatures will kick the issue around. New Jersey's Irish Catholic Governor Byrne and Connecticut's Italian Catholic Grasso are voting to prohibit the use of Medicaid for abortion; but New York's Irish Catholic Governor Carey and California's Irish Catholic Governor Brown are supporting Medicaid's use for such purposes. Carter's HEW Secretary, however, is apparently short-circuiting the law-makers by ordering the prohibition himself.

President Carter has vigorously defended the Court ruling and, instead of Medicaid for abortion, his Administration offers proposals for federal subsidies to people who adopt hard-to-place children (presumably the children of mothers who could not afford abortions), as well as subsidies to cover the maternity expenses of women who plan to put their babies up for adoption. These proposals resemble the House and Senate versions and will probably be enacted as the federal "option" regarding abortion. Of course, in the absence of federal funds, state and local governments can use their own welfare funds to pay for abortions, but these sources are already so overburdened that the prospect does not seem bright.

The antiabortionists feel their taxes should not pay for abortions. The right-to-abortionists say that's the democratic way, that every use to which taxes are put offends some minority. They also say—and they are absolutely right—that denying Medicaid for voluntary abortions is to impose an often unendurable hardship on thousands of impoverished women and the children they want and can afford to support.

What we learn from defeat can be as instructive as what we learn from victory. Feminists may learn that opposition to abortion rights is far stronger and more ubiquitous than assumed, and that it cannot be dismissed as a Catholic quibble. Liberals and leftists may learn, again, that conservatives can usually find ways to make life fair and opportunities equal when *they* are afflicted, but when the less influential are bearing the brunt, what we mainly get is a lot of sanctimonious talk about how tough life is. •

—Patrica Cayo Sexton

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Menahem Brinker

A Battle of Interpretation

The Last Campaign in the Israeli Election

Jerusalem

The Israeli election has been interpreted in very different ways by outside observers who know little about our political life and by our own experts who command a first-hand knowledge of Israeli society.

To most outsiders, the primary significance of the election is that for the first time in Israeli history a party believing in "the integrity of the Land of Israel" (meaning, in practice, trying to keep the West Bank and the Gaza Strip) has taken power Its platform opposes any settlement with the Palestinians, or even the Jordanians, that would provide for the return of these occupied areas. These observers see the major question as whether it is now possible to continue negotiations between Israel and the Arabs on the basis of the platform of the Likud, the largest political grouping in the Begin coalition (with 43 seats in the Knesset, Israel's parliament) and its major partner, the Mafdal (the National Religious Party, with 12 seats). Some outside observers fear that the intransigeant position of the Begin government will bring about renewed warfare and/or an imposed settlement in the Middle East.

Those more familiar with the history of Israel's young democracy know that the results of the election can be interpreted in other and at least as significant ways. Indeed, it is not easy to determine from the election results alone the will of the majority of the electorate.

The parties opposing territorial concessions in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip received collectively 58 mandates (or seats) out of the total of 120 in the Knesset. Besides the Likud, there are four other parties in the coalition of the Begin government. They are: Mafdal (the National Religious party), with 12 seats; the Shlomit, with 2 seats; Agudat Israel, with 4 seats; Po'alei (Workers') Agudat Israel, with 1 seat. Three of these parties support Begin's foreign policy wholeheartedly. The Agudat Israel, however in extremist Orthodox religious party, has a foreign-policy stand that is unclear though it tends to favor territorial concessions on all fronts in order to avoid bloodshed.

Thus, there is nearly an even balance: 801,000 votes went to parties that oppose territorial concessions on all fronts and 803,000 to parties that under certain conditions would favor them.

Those analysts who maintain that the Likud victory doesn't necessarily mean that the majority of the Israeli electorate rallied around the maximilist position favoring the retention of Judea and Samaria (the West Bank) offer another argument: In the 1973 elections the Labor Alignment was deliberately vague on this issue. Its platform spoke generally about territorial concessions as part of an overall peace settlement without specifically saying which territories might be yielded. This vagueness was partly the result of pressure from Moshe Dayan and his group, who wanted to leave open the possibility or implication that territorial concessions would be made only on the Golan Heights and in the Sinai. But in the 1977 election, at the insistence of Mapam, a left-wing party that is part of the Labor Alignment, territorial concessions regarding all three fronts were specifically mentioned in the Alignment platform. A similar clause can also be found in the platform of the newly formed, moderate Democratic Movement for Change (DMC) that is headed by Professor Yigael Yadin. Thus, people who opposed any territorial concessions in Judea and Samaria would be inclined not to vote for these two parties. Nevertheless, these parties, together with other small parties favoring territorial concessions on all fronts, received about the same support as those that support the "Land of Israel" outlook.

Yet, it cannot be denied that there was a significant shift from the dovish or "semidovish" camp to that of the hawks. The Likud, led by

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Menahem Begin, raised its support from 39 to 43 mandates. Its coalition partner, the Mafdal, with a similar stand on foreign policy, increased its seats from 10 to 12. the Labor Alignment went down from 51 mandates to 32, and its affiliated Arab party received only one of its former three seats. Together with the DMC, Sheli (a left-wing socialist party led Lova Eliav), Rakah (Israel's Communist party), and the smaller, moderate or semimoderate parties of the center received only 57 as against 62 mandates a few years ago, indicating a significant loss in what had been a clear majority in favor of territorial concessions.

Now, the major question remains whether these implications were clear to the approximately 100,000 voters who switched from one camp to the other in this election.

II

ELECTIONS in a representative democracy, in which each party has more than one position on a crucial issue, always leave room for varied interpretations. The struggle between these diverse positions and interpretations is very often the last battle in an election campaign. The victorious parties rush to interpret their victory as an expression of full public support for all of their positions, while the defeated parties look for consolation in other interpretations. Thus, now in Israel the leaders of the right-wing and religious parties view the election results as a net gain in public support of their religious and ideological positions—while the intellectuals of the Labor Alignment and the left refuse to accept this interpretation. They see the election results as mainly a protest against the corruption discovered in the previous Labor government. Labor indeed had been consistently in power for the past 40 years, starting even before the creation of the state. It became increasingly clear that its obligations to various pressure groups prevented the development of any substantial social and economic policy or the promotion of young and new figures within the party—all of which led to insensitivity toward the will of the public.

This interpretation, which refuses to accept the election results as a sign of ideological support for the Likud position, can be disputed by the fact that the DMC (of Yigael Yadin) provided the voters with an opportunity to register a protest vote against the ruling Labor Alignment without having to resort to the Likud. Despite the impressive achievements of the DMC (it polled 12.5 percent of the electorate and received 15 seats in the Knesset, though the party is only one year old), it did not manage, together with the Labor Alignment, to keep the same number of seats that the Alignment alone had held in the previous Knesset. Nor did it prevent the extremist camp from gaining eight new seats—although thousands of middle-class Likud supporters did switch over to the DMC.

Against this claim, the supporters of the left are forced to concede that the Likud did succeed in convincing the public at least on one major issue: "We [the Likud] are the only force able to replace the present government." Many people who felt strongly about the corruption unveiled in the ruling Labor regime were not satisfied merely to register a protest vote for the DMC—which they suspected would in any case join a coalition headed by the Labor Alignment. They wanted to bring about a complete change in government.

It is also possible that many voters did not believe that the Likud would have sufficient power to form a new coalition. Others may have consoled themselves with the depressing (or cynical) thought that, in reality, the United States, and not Israel, determines the relations among the countries of the Middle East.

For those who believe that domestic Israeli policy was responsible for the change in government, there is an even more negative significance in the election outcome. The results indicate that tens of thousands of Israeli voters see unfortunate connections between government corruption and a moderate foreign policy on the one hand, and integrity and an inflexible foreign policy on the other. These correlations may only be confined to specific elements in society—blue-collar workers, the youth, residents of development towns, and the Oriental communities. But it is precisely these segments of society that have significantly shifted their support from the Labor Alignment to the Likud. White-collar workers, the middle-class, and dissatisfied elements in the kibbutzim and moshavim (separate, cooperative farms) supported the DMC. Demographically, however, the first group is predominant, and since 1958, there has occurred a steady increase in Likud support at the expense of the Labor Alignment. This is based on deep-rooted, structural demographic factors and is a source of concern among many of the "finer elements" in Israeli society. Indeed, in the recent election, we have witnessed a 6-to-10 percent decrease in the support of both the center and the left—and this was part of the general protest that caused the Labor Alignment to lose approximately 33 percent of its earlier vote.

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III

THE OUTCOME of the Knesset election is depressing, at least for those who believe that a flexible Israeli policy with regard to territorial concessions is needed both educationally (by stressing humanistic as opposed to tribalistic aspects of Zionism) and politically (by bringing peace closer or at least by making war a more remote possibility). The picture is not radically changed by the fact that the Labor Alignment received an absolute majority of about 56 percent in the elections of the Histadrut (the General Federation of Labor) while the Likud increased its power by merely 4 percent, giving it 27 percent of the electorate. The Histadrut represents approximately 60 percent of those eligible to vote in the Knesset elections. Many Israeli workers are not members of the Histadrut—they belong to other labor federations. The Mafdal does not participate in Histadruth elections, for there is a separate labor union of religious workers. The National Labor Federation, however, founded in the 1930s by Zev Jabotinsky (the spiritual mentor of Begin's Herut party, which is the principle faction in the Likud), functions within the Histadruth though standing in opposition to its socialist ideology.

These facts do not necessarily diminish the achievements of the Labor Alignment in the Histadrut elections. This is especially true if we remember that the Labor Alignment received half a million votes in the Histadrut, or 50,000 more than in the Knesset elections. If we also remember that many of those who voted for the Labor Alignment are not members of the Histadrut, we may assume that approximately 100,000 voters changed their minds in the month that passed between the Knesset elections and the Histadrut elections.

But more time will be needed before a "back to the Alignment" movement can take place. A conspicuous failure on the part of the Likud, such as an open confrontation with the United States or rampant unemployment, would be necessary to bring that about, since rightist ideology *per se* does not seem to trouble many Israelis. Only a relatively small segment of the population finds the rise of religious coercion disturbing. This may be due to the nationalistic indoctrination of the educational system and to the fear of foreign cultures. On the other hand, however, everyone is aware of the indispensability of American aid for Israel's survival.

The Labor party has suffered internal changes that have progressively and increasingly weakened it since the Six Day War. Such leaders as Levi Eshkol and Golda Meir, who were accepted by the various factions within the party, have either passed away or retired, thereby weakening the party's ability to fight against the right. The conquests of '67 have reopened traditional controversies regarding the aims of Zionism. The right has added pseudo-strategic arguments to justify holding on to the territories as part of its ideology of preserving "the integrity of the Land of Israel." And so many important people support the traditional ideology of the Zionist right within the Labor ranks that it became difficult or impossible for the entire party openly to oppose it. Middle-of-the-road people, such as Dayan, led the party to compromises, and demeaned it by threats that gradually helped to erase any clear-cut ideological differences between the right and the center and left. In order to find a common denominator for the conflicting interests among its different factions, the party did its best not "to annoy" anyone, and thus did not "arouse anyone's enthusiasm" either. (This view was expressed at a symposium sponsored by the Israeli socialist monthly *Emda* on the theme of the downfall of the Labor party.) To this can be added the erosion that occurred during the 40 years of the party's rule both in the government and the Histadrut, leaving the impression that there is no longer any article of faith within the party that is strong enough to unite its members above and beyond the interests of power struggle. The party must now try to renew its contacts with the various segments of society that it has neglected; the workers in the development towns, the youth, and the intelligentsia. It must prove that it can provide an alternative to the policies of the Likud on crucial issues such as peace, social problems, and progress toward economic independence.

Some entertain the hope that negative factors in the Likud government will alone enable the Labor party to regain power and that an extended and painful rehabilitation period will not be necessary. In the meantime, however, the DMC has created the image of a new and important force that is both centrist and liberal in domestic affairs and in foreign affairs very similar to the Alignment. If the Likud should fall while the Labor Alignment fails to create a new social image, the DMC may yet prove to be the Likud's successor. And if a strain in American-Israeli relations should bring about a split in the Likud, its more moderate factions might well wish to join forces with the DMC. Israel is currently in the midst of developments that could drastically alter its traditional political system.

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Various new political constellations are possible, and thus there is no guarantee that a failure on Begin's part will necessarily put Labor back in power.

In light of the failure of the Zionist left in the elections, there is always the possibility that none of the socialist forces will be able to play a part in the struggle for political and social influence in Israel. Those elements of the left that were represented in Lova Eliav's party Sheli received only two mandates (or 1.5 percent of the vote). About half of its support came from students, intellectuals, and second-generation kibbutzniks, the rest from workers and minor officials, and from some elements not strongly rooted in the society.

Sheli, obviously, did not succeed in attracting and explaining its position to large segments of the population. It offers a peace policy that is radical and daring—the return of all the territories for real peace, partial or total demilitarization of the territories, the right of the Palestinians to self-determination in an independent state or in a confederation with Jordan, with part of Jerusalem possibly serving as its capital.

The grave suspicion felt by every Israeli concerning the Arabs' true intentions had to be detrimental to such a "pure" party, especially when it is clear to everyone that the chances for peace do not depend on the attitude of one side alone. The left has tried to overcome these obstacles by emphasizing the added values of a radical peace proposal, such as the obvious moral and political advantages for Israel if the Arabs refused to accept such a plan; it has put emphasis on the humanistic character of Zionism, stressed the possibility of strengthening the moderates in the divided Arab world, and of improving Israel's image in world opinion. Naturally, it is also necessary to prove that Israel would not be exposing itself to mortal danger by adopting such a plan. Sheli's strongest claim is that—although with a radical Israeli peace initiative there still is a possibility of renewed warfare—without such initiative another Middle Eastern war would be inevitable. The complexity of this view will explain both Sheli's success among the educated youth and the intelligentsia, and its resounding failure among all other elements of society.

Polls equating the strength of the Likud and the Labor Alignment that were published right before the election also served to convince many potentially leftist voters to cast their ballots for the Labor Alignment. They hoped that their reluctant vote would prevent the Likud from becoming the major political force in Israel. This hope was in vain. They were certainly not the only Israelis who were disappointed by the election results, but their votes were the clearest reflection of the lack of ideological balance on the Israeli political scene. By lack of ideological balance we mean that there was a strong and clear-cut representation of the center and the right—but no strong or influential left. This caused many of the radical voters to choose "the lesser of two evils" at the cost of their ideological integrity, in order to prevent what they viewed as "the greater evil." For them the Likud means a closed and suspicious society, cultivating the tribalistic sources of its solidarity, not believing in a normalization of its relations with its neighbors, living by the sword and by its real or imagined superiority in a hostile environment, while awaiting a miracle.

Only time will tell to what extent Israeli society will recover from the negative and depressing spirit that emerges out of this new government.

— *Translated by* YISHAI TOBIN □

Irving Howe

Israel: A Visitor's Notes

Jerusalem

What a tourist can learn in a few weeks about the political situation of a country is notoriously questionable. All I propose to do here is to supplement Menahem Brinker's report with a few observations and speculations gleaned from talking to some good political minds in Israel.

The Israeli sociologist Dan Horowitz, writing in *Emda*, a monthly rather similar to *Dissent*, distinguishes between structural and conjunctural causes for the electoral shift from the Labor Alignment to Begin's Likud. A structural cause would be the demographic changes that have gradually been taking place in Israel over the past 25 years; a conjunctural cause, the scandals about corruption that beset the Labor regime during its final days. True enough; but the task of the analyst is to relate the two kinds of causes, so that we lapse neither into a passive determinism nor transient

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superficialities. Most of the conjunctural causes, it turns out, can be related to the structural ones. That a reporter discovered Mrs. Rabin's secret bank account in the U.S. was an accident; that she should have had the account at all, tells us a good deal about the moral transformation occurring among portions of the Israeli elite.

So let us turn to the "deeper" causes, generally agreed-upon or speculative, for this shift in Israeli politics:

(1) According to Shlomo Avineri, the respected Israeli political scientist, there has occurred in Israel a major change in class composition, equivalent to the one that has been taking place among Jewish populations throughout the world. After a brief historical interval during which many Jews fell (or rose) to proletarian status, they have become a bourgeois people—concentrated in certain branches of commerce and industry, and especially in the professions. This has also been happening in Israel despite the Labor Zionist ideology of "productive labor," and the recent election records, in part, a catching-up of the country's political arrangements with its socioeconomic structure. The children of Ashkenazi (East and Central European) Labor Zionist pioneers go to universities—just like the children of Jewish immigrant socialists in the U.S.—and, whatever their values and ideas, they are no longer proletarians. They become doctors, professors, social workers, government officials. As a result, the social base of Labor Zionism, with its social democratic ideology and code of moral solidarity and self-sacrifice, is gradually becoming eroded. Though not the immediate *cause* of the Labor defeat, suggests Avineri, this is a major *condition* making for a decline in the hold of its ideology among both Labor supporters and the population at large. Between the Israel of Ben Gurion and the Israel of today there is an enormous difference, and the values of labor pioneering require a new application if they are not to fade into mere rhetoric for May Day speeches.

(2) BECAUSE OF THE arrival of hundreds of thousands of Asian-African ("Oriental") Jews in the last few decades, the country's social map has changed sharply. The Oriental Jews come from premodern societies; upon arrival, they are still in the grip of traditionalist, patriarchal, petty-trading styles of life; many are poorly educated (though there are small elites of educated Iraqui and Egyptian Jews); and they have to take, at first, the worst jobs. The symbols, ideas, and values of Zionism mean little to them; still less so, those of the socialist wing of Zionism. Few care to live in the kibbutzim; they gravitate naturally to big cities. They have encountered Labor Zionism through East and Central European-born officials of the Histadruth, the massive labor organization, or through government officials whom they often think arrogant, condescending, and unfair.

There really is a great cultural gap between these two kinds of Jews—which Begin, a skillful politician and demagogue, has exploited. (Some of his party workers kept attacking the kibbutzim as "rich," the special prerogative of "them," that is, the East and Central European Jews.)

Many Oriental Jews are ripe for Begin's chauvinist appeals—they bring with them an understandable hatred of the Arabs, under whose rule they have long suffered, and often they can cope with the complexities of Mid-Eastern politics only through the nationalist slogans of the Likud. This narrow-spirited patriotism serves to give psychic content to the lives of people who have been uprooted from their old cultures but have yet to find a secure place in the new. It gives a rapid, synthetic identity far more emotionally stirring than can be given by the universalist subtleties of the Israeli left or the pragmatic bureaucratism of Labor Zionist governments. Admiring Begin as a "strong man" who will not compromise with the hated Arabs and as a leader who will clean out Labor officials whom they often found unsympathetic, the Oriental Jews provided heavy margins for the right-wing coalition.

(3) FOR THE PAST DECADE, but especially between 1967 and 1972, there has been a considerable boom in the Israeli economy—a boom that coexists with severe imbalances of trade, heavy deficit spending, and high inflation. All this is made possible by U.S. economic aid.

Under the leadership of the late Pinhas Sapir, when he was minister of finance, the Labor government undertook a policy of attracting large amounts of foreign capital, which it supplemented with generous "directed credits" to domestic private enterprise. In the name of strengthening national defense, which consumes some 40 percent of Israel's budget, and in order to provide jobs and economic opportunity for the incoming Oriental Jews, the Labor government enabled a major expansion of the private sector of the economy—and with it, naturally, a new bourgeoisie.

To what extent was this an uncomfortable necessity created by Israel's defense needs, and to

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what extent did it reflect an erosion of socialist values within the Labor party? It was probably both. The defenders of the Labor establishment stress inescapable historical conditions; and their left critics claim that the process of expansion could have been controlled more stringently in behalf of egalitarian values. It is hard for an outsider to say, but I am impressed by the judgment of Haim Barkai, a highly qualified, moderate, and non-Marxist economist, who told me that while the economic development was necessary, it could have been controlled in nonauthoritarian ways so as to stay a little closer to the original values of the country. As it is, adds Barkai, Israel has moved from a society committed to equality to a society in the grip of enterprise.

The new bourgeoisie displays the characteristics typical of *arrivistes* everywhere: It is energetic, grasping. It does not like to pay taxes. It is contemptuous, more and more openly, of the egalitarian and stoical values of the country's founders. It is often ostentatious in display. And it rationalizes its hunger for accumulation in the name of national security.

A significant and growing portion of the Oriental Jews has entered this new bourgeoisie, mostly at the level of small trade but sometimes, as in the construction industry, as big entrepreneurs. In construction the Oriental Jews grow more powerful, while much of the heavy labor they once performed is now being done by Arabs, either by Israeli Arabs or those brought in from the West Bank and Gaza.

Now, one of the brighter parts of the Labor record under Rabin was its policy of helping the Oriental Jews to rise economically through social credits, benefits, etc. This is what a social democratic government ought to do, but unfortunately it brought little immediate political reward to Labor. For the Oriental Jews, caught by the rhythm of upward economic mobility, supported in the main, not the Rabin government that had helped them, but the Likud that promised a still greater bourgeoisification unflecked by the remnants of Labor ideology. In a sense, Labor created a social Frankenstein that helped defeat it.

The new bourgeoisie is not, of course, predominantly composed of Oriental Jews; there are many more Ashkenazim who have grown affluent—and in the judgment of some observers, these form the social base of the Yadin movement, middle-class and middle-of-the road. In any case, there appears to be a considerable disillusionment—a weariness, a boredom—with socialist values, and even if Labor were soon to return to office it would probably be less as a result of a socialist renewal than out of a fear, shared by considerable parts of the population, that Begin will precipitate a new war. It seems unlikely, right now, that the political-social turn created by the policy of "directed capitalism" can soon be reversed. Major new social and economic energies, such as we know in advanced capitalist countries, have been set in motion—and one must wonder how long before the socialist idea can again become a vibrant one for large portions of the Israeli population.

(4) AT THE VERY CENTER of these developments, both as cause and effect, is the steady weakening of Labor Zionism as a political and moral force. From election to election its support has steadily declined, though never before as sharply as now. To some extent, the process has been unavoidable. Labor Zionism simply was not designed or equipped to deal with a mass of premodern people from African and Asian countries who knew neither Hebrew nor Yiddish, the languages in which it was nurtured, and to whom its traditions and ideas were largely a matter of indifference. Nor are the conditions of siege under which the country has lived ever since its founding likely to stimulate moods of openness and experiment such as socialist or even social democratic policies require.

Yet once major allowance is made for unfavorable and indeed appalling historical circumstances, it is hard to avoid the conclusion that Labor Zionism has for some years now been going through a severe disintegration, both as movement and idea. The scandals that rocked the Rabin government, and that officials of the party tend to minimize as the *narishkeit* (foolishness) of a few individuals, seems symptomatic of a general moral decline. Right now the movement is in a state of shock, and some of its recent political responses under the guidance of Shimon Peres have been designed to compete in "toughness" with Begin. This course seems unlikely to bring Labor either social-moral renewal or practical success.*

The gradual erosion of the Labor Zionist ideal, the distaste that many educated young people feel for the party and the skepticism with which they respond to its leadership tend to create a vacuum of belief in the country. But this country, because of its traditions and circumstances, needs belief—its

*A fascinating example of how Labor failures or inadequacies played into the hands of Begin occurred

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very oxygen of survival. Hence, as the Labor Zionist ideal comes to seem worn-out or compromised or sullied, there occurs a growth—its extent cannot yet be measured—of a nationalist-clerical outlook in which the symbols of religion matter both in their own right and as political tokens to be manipulated by Begin and his allies.

Any expectation that Begin will soon fall is probably unrealistic. Ony two things could bring that about: a major rupture between Israel and the U.S. and a large-scale conflict over religious and cultural issues between the country's secular majority and its aggressive religious minority. Intellectual critics of the Begin government tend to be pessimistic. Avineri suspects that the demagogic appeals of Begin will begin to wear out fairly soon (there are already signs that his "triumph" in the U.S., so uncritically celebrated by the American Jewish establishment, is being seen for the mere public-relations concoction it actually was). Yet Avineri believes that it may take eight or ten years before Labor manages to regroup politically and intellectually.

Others hold a view, assertively "realistic," that nothing much will change here anyway because the options available to *any* Israeli government are very limited. The economic situation is not likely to get any better or, barring major American pressures, much worse. Somehow the country struggles along on a standard of living higher than its resources allow—as Barkai remarks, the state of the economy is terrible, but living conditions for most people are not bad. Begin offers drama, circus, chauvinist rhetoric, and for a time this will work. Later there may be conflict within his Oriental constituency between their charged-up nationalism and an awareness that such a politics yields economic hardship—but not, one suspects, soon.

Still, the notion that nothing much will change because nothing much can is a rather superficial one. In some areas of social policy—e.g., abortion laws—the new government has already begun a significant retreat. To gain the support of the religious parties, especially the ultra-Orthodox Agudah, Begin has had to make promises regarding relations between state and synagogue that, if even partly redeemed, will cause severe conflicts. And the religious parties are, in their own way, serious: they expect such bargains to be kept.

I HAVE SAID NOTHING so far about foreign policy, in part because things are so volatile in this respect that not much can be said weeks before these lines are read, and in part because there is general agreement here that the election was decided not on foreign but on domestic issues. But however it was decided, there can be no question that the *result* will have serious repercussions in foreign policy. Begin insists on keeping the West Bank, and despite the desperate or fatuous whisperings of some American Jewish leaders that this is just a bargaining tactic, there is every reason to believe in his sincerity. He is not a mere opportunist; he is a convinced fanatic. And his political opponents owe him at least this: that they take him at his word even if *their* word sometimes requires discounting.

If Begin persists in his stand on the West Bank, as one suspects he will, then there can be no full-scale peace in the Middle East, though it is just barely possible that there may be a temporary deal with Egypt and perhaps Syria for partial withdrawals—which would leave Jordan and the Palestinians each holding part of the bag. Will the Arab countries agree to such a deal? No one knows for certain, but meanwhile there is the strong possibility of a major split between Begin and Carter regarding terms of a possible agreement.

Perhaps the most troubling change in official Israeli declarations since Begin took office is the *kind* of justification offered for keeping the West Bank. In the past, official Israeli arguments generally were put forward in the name of security—how dangerous it would be if a hostile force, Palestinian and perhaps with Soviet "advisers," were established once more along the West Bank. Right or wrong, this argument was pragmatic, conditional, short-range, and to be taken seriously. Now, instead of speaking about an overriding security *need*, Begin speaks about a transcendent (Biblical) *right* for Israel to rule

here in mid-August. The government announced a scheme to "equalize social services" for Arabs in the occupied territories. It will be a long time before this is put into practice, since there is no funding specified in the government's budget for this purpose. And it is commonly assumed that the real purpose of this announcement is to pave the way toward a take-over of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Still, there is a clear argument to be made that some of the proposals advanced by Begin are intrinsically desirable. Thus, the *Jerusalem Post* of August 17 reports that "the most urgent of the new measures is the regulation of labor practices in Gaza and northern Sinai, where *moshav* [cooperative farm] owners are known to have exploited the local inhabitants for years, paying substandard wages and employing underage children." Had the Labor government taken steps to end such practices, Begin now could not use his seemingly humane proposals in behalf of his long-range reactionary purposes.

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permanently over "Judea and Samaria" (the West Bank). Since, however, some 800,000 Arabs constitute the population of the West Bank, and since they surely do not want to live under Israeli rule even if it provides them with better social services than an Arab government would, Begin's argument takes on an imperialist cast. It implies that Israel has a Biblically derived mission to dominate whoever is living in the West Bank. Nor do Moshe Dayan's proposals for Arab "autonomy" in such circumstances provide much reassurance—talk about "autonomy" usually accompanies schemes for domination.

In public debate Begin has been asked what he would propose regarding Arab citizenship if the West Bank were to become part of Israel. He answered that the Arabs could freely choose between Israeli and Jordanian citizenship. Now, in the utterly unlikely event that the West Bank Arabs would be clever or spiteful enough to choose Israeli citizenship, this would yield two consequences distasteful to almost all Israelis: first, a greatly enlarged Arab minority that, with its high birth rate, would in time challenge Jewish hegemony, and second, a large increase in the power of Rakah, the pro-Arab Communist party, which already has five seats in the Knesset based mostly on the votes of Israeli Arabs. But the West Bank Arabs would not, of course, choose Israeli citizenship if the West Bank were annexed to Israel—they would remain a disfranchised subject people, with all the tragic consequences that brings to both ruled and rulers. Is this a prospect Israel and its friends can tolerate? Is it to *this* that the vision of Zionism will come?

THE NEWS FROM ISRAEL, then, is not encouraging for people of socialist, or liberal, or dovish persuasion. But I think it just as well that we recognize the reality for what it is. Those of us who will try in the coming period to maintain a properly critical response to recent developments in Israel while at the same time reaffirming our support for its survival and security are not going to have an easy time of it. Yet precisely such a balance of response is what now seems required. □

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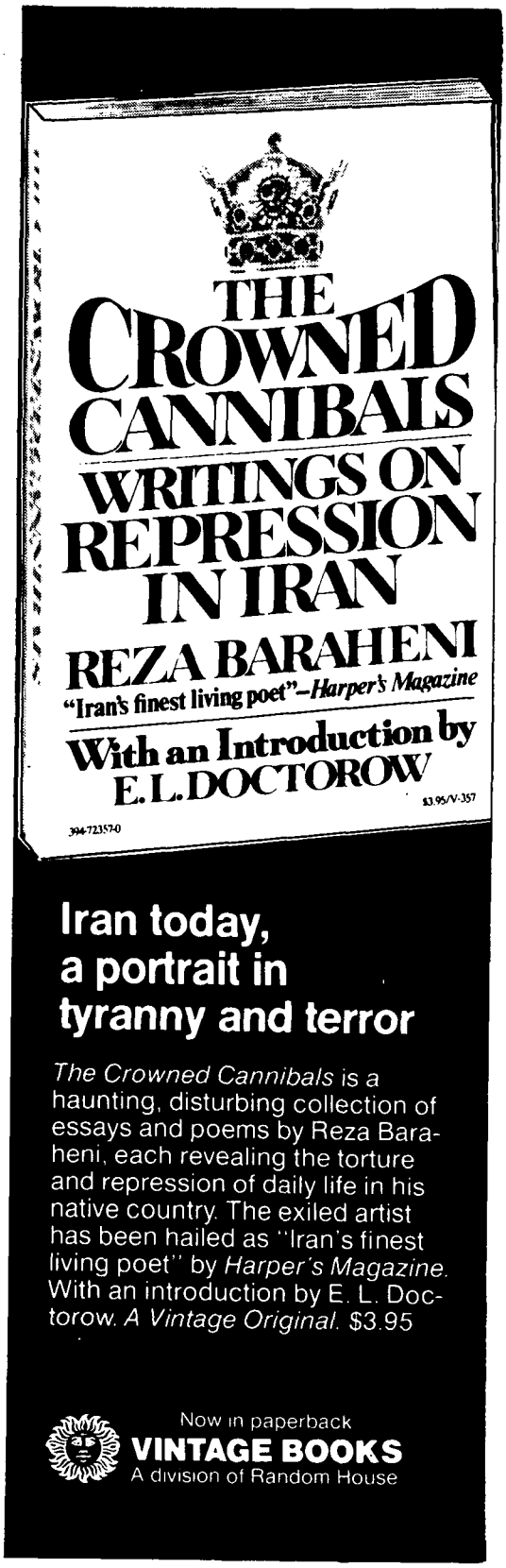
France: The SP-CP Election Alliance

by Stanley Plastrik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A. Krasikov

Vodka: Commodity Number One

Let us raise our glasses, let's move them together!
A toast to the Muses, a toast to reason!
—Pushkin, *Bacchic Song* (1825)

From ancient times, wine has added pleasure and animation to talk between friends. In those countries where vines are cultivated, in the homeland of wine, people did not gulp it down. Draining one's glass did not mean "knocking it back." One sought the bouquet in wine just as in talk one seeks the truth. Drinkers savored their wine, and their tongues did not falter, even if an old, mature wine should affect their legs and gradually spread a sweet languor all through their bodies.

The art of drinking sprang from the art of winemaking. The winegrower's aim was not to produce as much wine as possible but to produce the best wine, in terms of aroma and taste. Wine brought joy to the heart and boldness to the mind.

In countries where the vine was not grown, the people brewed beer and ale, hymned by Burns in *John Barleycorn:*

John Barleycorn was a hero bold,
Of noble enterprise,
For if you do but taste his blood
'T will make your courage rise.

Style in drinking depends very much, of course, on what is being drunk. Unlike wine and ale, vodka intoxicates immediately, and people drink it down at one gulp, so as not to notice its taste and smell. (Only in comparatively recent times has it become possible to purify it of fusel oil). And instantaneous intoxication is a very different matter from the protracted enjoyment of a drink that sharpens consciousness and stimulates thought.

Speedy intoxication raises from the depths of a man's heart not courage but violence, not joy of living but maudlin tears, not a feeling of benevolence but causeless and senseless rage. Russian popular sayings about vodka and drinking are characteristic in this respect. Unlike those related to the partaking of wine among a group of friends, they speak only of the evil arising from drink—with the sole exception of the basic proposition that "Russia's gaiety lies in drinking." What sort of gaiety is meant by this? Popular sayings provide the answer. "Drink, and beat people up—that's the life." "Drink, and smash your glass—and if anybody doesn't like it, smash his face in." "Drink beer and hit your father-in-law in the face, eat pies and beat your mother-in-law." "They drank with Phil, and Phil got beaten." "He went out to celebrate and came back home to mourn." "They spend a day celebrating and have sore heads for a week from the hangover." "He sticks it out

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through a bad day, and when a good day comes he gets drunk." And, as a direct reply to Prince Vladimir's saying about Russia's gaiety, we have this: "That sort of gaiety will bring on a hangover."

In Czarist times people drank heavily, as anyone must realize who has read our classics. But statistics show that the quantity of alcohol consumed per head of population was not so large, and in any case was a great deal less than, say, in France, where everyone drinks, but what they drink is mainly a rather weak wine (five or six degrees). They drink this wine not in order to get drunk and find oblivion, but as an accompaniment to meals, just as in other countries people drink water while they eat. When considering wine and vodka it is necessary to keep in mind the way in which they are taken. The sort of drinking bout that calls, the morning after, for "a hair of the dog that bit you" is fraught with a principle of rapid development.

From the statistical yearbook *Narodnoye Khozyaistvo SSSR* [*The Soviet Economy*] we learn that in 1913 about 120 million decaliters of vodka were produced, and 800 million decaliters of beer. (A decaliter—ten liters—is approximately the capacity of an ordinary large domestic bucket.) Translating these figures into terms of pure alcohol, we get the figure of 3.35 liters per head of the population.

In 1955 the country reached, and a year later surpassed, the level of Czarist times, and by 1970 was producing nearly twice as much: 6.35 liters of pure alcohol per head of the population. These figures are not presented straightforwardly in the statistical publication mentioned, but have to be deduced by comparing various data that are given in it. These data throw little light, unfortunately, on this question. They do not provide much information, especially so far as the amount spent by the Soviet citizen on the purchase of alcoholic drinks is concerned. But even a few years ago this item of expenditure was not such a hush-hush subject, and in earlier issues of the yearbook (which began to be published in 1956) it was possible to find something about it.

Thus, in the section "Trade" there appeared, year after year, a table headed "Commodity Structure of the Retail Turnover in State and Co-operative Trade," with a column showing the consumption of drink, even though this was somewhat less than fully explicit, being entitled: "Alcoholic and Nonalcoholic Beverages." This column continued to appear for several years, but then in 1964 it vanished. A mysterious obscurity began to gather around the subject of alcohol. Could it be that "drinking" had ceased to constitute our national "gaiety"? Or had we gone over to kvass? But, if so, what would be the point of concealing such remarkable progress?

It is necessary to look into this matter of the missing column. If we compare successive issues of the yearbook over a number of years we observe that the figures for consumption of all the goods shown in the table increase more or less steadily from one year to the next. Only one of the columns—"Other Foodstuffs"—suddenly makes an incredible jump in the year 1963. Until then it had shown a comparatively small expenditure, much smaller than for butter. But now, all of a sudden, it has increased tenfold and, by 1970, has reached the figure of nearly 27 billion rubles, nine times as much as the expenditure on butter (p. 582 of the 1970 handbook).

Let us try to discover what is meant by "Other Foodstuffs." Down to 1963, the yearbook itself provided the details. It listed, between brackets: "Coffee, spices, vitamins, mushrooms, soya-bean products, etc." Mushrooms, soya-bean products, and so on accounted, of course, for only a very small proportion of the total amount spent by the working people in state shops—according to my calculation, 3.2 percent of all expenditure on foodstuffs. But since it is obvious, even to the naked eye, how disproportionately "other foodstuffs" increased after 1963, this fact, together with the disappearance of the "beverages" column, reveals to the attentive reader the whole essence of the manipulation

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of figures that the compilers of the yearbook have effected. They have merged two columns, which before had been presented separately: one for "beverages" and one for "other foodstuffs." In order to establish this clearly, let us just take a look at the yearbook for 1960, turn to the table that interests us, and compare this with the corresponding table in the yearbook for 1970. In the first case two columns appear, in the second they have been merged. In the first case we see that 110,230 million rubles was spent on "beverages," and 13,730 million on "other foodstuffs." These figures are given in old rubles: translating them into the new values we get 11,023 million and 1,373 million—altogether, then, 12,396 million. In the 1970 issue of the yearbook, in the column "Other Foodstuffs," against the year 1960 (page 582) we find precisely that total figure, obtained by combining the figures from the two previously published columns—a combination the editors have forgotten to draw the reader's attention to. Similarly, they have forgotten to enumerate, as they did before, between brackets, what these "other foodstuffs" consist of (coffee, mushrooms, etc.). For, if they were to list them honestly, they would have to add beverages to the mushrooms, while if they were to omit beverages from the list, something utterly absurd would appear to have happened—mushrooms, laurel leaves, and coffee being sold on a scale that is hard to conceive.

And so, without going carefully through all the figures, and merely by reading those for one category of goods, we are taken aback, and find that there is something odd here. The table lists 25 different groups of commodities. Separate mention is made of butcher's meat and poultry, tinned meat, tinned vegetables and tinned fish, cheese, and eggs. Even salt and tea are accorded separate columns. In a special column we find mention of various fruits, berries, watermelons and melons. Everything is named, everything, it would seem, has been accounted for—but even after this there remain certain articles of consumption left unnamed, on which, nevertheless, the colossal sum of 27 billion rubles has been spent, or nearly a third of the total expenditure on all foodstuffs. And now we notice that in this remarkable table everything that people *eat* has been named, but of what people *drink* only tea is mentioned by name. Before us we have a highly moral, absolutely sober table, without any trace of wine or vodka. Oh, well done!

Let us reestablish the true situation, if only in the form in which it was shown to us in the first issues of the yearbook. In those years, as I calculated above, the relative weight of "other foodstuffs" was, on the average, 3.2 percent of total purchases of foodstuffs. By calculating what this meant in rubles and deducting it from the new, post-1963 combined total for "other foodstuffs," we recover the figure formerly given for "alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages," which has been so clumsily hidden up the editor's sleeve.

True, we do not obtain the previous accuracy to a million rubles, for the figures we have deduced are not direct figures but have been established through collation, by effecting a sort of "confrontation" between indices scattered in a number of different places. But our error, inevitable in such calculations, cannot be of any great significance: even if the sale of mushrooms in the state shops had increased tenfold, would this seriously effect the trade turnover as a whole?

It is better to know the truth with a few inexactitudes than to remain content with the half-truth of unscrupulous manipulations.

Still keeping to the previously published column, with nonmanipulated values, which showed "other foodstuffs," let us calculate its magnitude for 1970 in terms of rubles. Total purchases of foodstuffs by the population in that year came to 86 billion rubles, which means that the item we are looking for came to 2.8 billion rubles (3.2 percent of 86). Deducting this sum from the current, half-honest total for "other foodstuffs," amounting to 27 billion rubles, we obtain the figure for what, in the early issues of the yearbook,

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was entitled, almost artlessly: "Alcoholic and Nonalcoholic Beverages." It is 24.2 billion rubles. This, then, is the expenditure on alcohol, diluted with the expenditure on kvass and Narzan water. What we now have to do is to separate the components of this mixture. This is not an easy task, but it is worth making the effort needed. It is reasonable to begin with the nonalcoholic beverages, since they are much cheaper than the alcoholic ones, and the inaccuracies unavoidable in calculating what they represent in the total will have less bearing on the ultimate result.

What quantity of soft drinks was produced (and drunk) in 1970? However strange it may seem at first glance, the output of soft drinks has paralleled the output of vodka for many years now. In the handbook *Promyshlennost SSSR (Soviet Industry)* for 1964, the production of vodka and of soft drinks, respectively, was given for the years between 1950 and 1964. Let us take these figures year by year. As numerator we will put the figure for soft drinks, in millions of decaliters, and as denominator the figure for vodka, in the same terms. In this way we get:

soft drinks:	vodka:
1950 — 72	62
1953 — 87.8	95.4
1955 — 97.8	116.9
1956 — 97.2	122.9
1957 — 115.2	140.2
1958 — 120.1	145.3
1959 — 134.6	137.3
1960 — 141.5	138.1
1961 — 142.8	145.7
1962 — 149	162
1963 — 155	152

As was to be expected with a planned, socialist system of production, output rose in a planned way, and the production of vodka decreased only in years when the harvest was poor (1959 and 1963). The general picture is that the annual output of soft drinks lagged slightly behind that of vodka, but in those particular years vodka had to yield first place. It may be that, besides the failure of the harvest, socialist emulation between workers in different branches of the food industry played a certain role here, too.

The annual increase in the output of soft drinks was sometimes 5, sometimes 6, sometimes 7 million decaliters—sometimes even only 1 million. In only two cases out of eleven did it exceed 7 million (once it was 18 million and once 14 million). Let us assume, so as not to make any mistake, that after 1963 the rate of increase was 9-10 million decaliters each year. We thus get the figure of 220-230 million decaliters of soft drinks produced in 1970. Taking into account the installation in recent years of automatic vending machines for soda water, let us increase this figure to 250-300 million decaliters. If all the soft drinks sold were sold in bottles, that would mean 5-6 billion bottles, or 20-25 bottles per person—quite a lot, it would seem, since soft drinks are purchased mainly in the towns and mostly in the summer.

Let us work out the average price of a bottle of one of these drinks. Fruit juices do not come into our calculation, as they figure in the "fruit" column, and in any case they are not a large item of consumption. Mineral water costs 10 kopecks a bottle. Soda water and kvass are sold more cheaply. Only fruit-flavored drinks are dearer. If we take 18 kopecks as the average, we are certainly overestimating: however, let us stay with this hypothetical price. On that basis, we obtain a figure between 900 million rubles and something a little over 1 billion. Let us assume the figure is 1 billion.

Accordingly, the cost of nonalcoholic beverages comes to no more than a 24th of the total expenditure on drink, taking the latter to amount to the already calculated sum of 24.2 billion rubles. Deducting from that figure, therefore, 1 billion rubles for soft drinks, we see that 23.2 billion rubles was spent on alcohol. And so, at last, we have found where the dog lies buried, in the table called "Commodity Structure of Retail Turnover."

According to this table, total purchases by

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the population in state and cooperative shops in 1970 amounted to 155.2 billion rubles. This means that alcohol accounted for almost 15 percent of total purchases: and if we make the comparison with foodstuffs alone, it accounted for 27 percent of *that* total. Every ruble received by a food shop was due, for 27 kopecks out of the 100, to the sales of alcohol. But, as the Roman Emperor Vespasian said when he put a tax on the public urinals: "Money doesn't smell."

However successfully the drink business may have developed, we still need to compare it with the overall dynamic of popular consumption over a series of years: when we have done this, our picture will be complete. In the table "Dynamics of Sales of Most Important Commodities" (on p. 558 of the yearbook for 1970), the readings are taken with the year 1940 as 100. On this basis the sale of alcoholic products in the last 30 years emerges as follows: in 1950—75 (a decline fully explicable in the period just after the war), in 1960—200, in 1965—283, in 1970—439. An increase to a figure almost four-and-a-half times that of 1940! In this table everything is shown, not in rubles, as in the "commodity-structure" table previously analyzed, but in percentages calculated in comparable prices. The increase by four-and-a-half times is therefore an increase in the actual physical quantity of alcohol drunk. The purchase of many other commodities has increased since 1940 to a greater extent than that of alcohol: e.g., radio sets 38-fold, milk 13-fold, furniture 18-fold, and so on.

This, then, is the picture as compared with the year 1940. But let us try to examine a period closer to the present—say, the decade between 1960 and 1970. What purchases increased, and by how much, during those ten years? To find this, let us take the same table, but use 1960 as our base year for calculations. A simple division of the figures in the column for 1970 by the corresponding figures in the column for 1960 reveals the dynamic of purchases over the decade: 1.8 times as much meat was bought in 1970 as in 1960, nearly 1.5 times as much butter, 1.6 times as much sugar. Sales of textile fabrics did not increase, they fell: but if we lump textile fabrics together with clothing and knitwear (which is much more reasonable than lumping vodka with kvass, since knitwear and textile fabrics do indeed go together, whereas kvass and vodka do not) we get a 1.7-fold increase. To do this we have had to bring in data from the "Commodity Structure" table. That table also shows that purchases of footwear of all kinds increased to more than twice the earlier figure. The increase in purchases of furniture was 2.6-fold.

Sales of alcoholic products increased 2.2-fold, and this ratio of 1:2.2, clearly shown in the "Dynamic" table (the actual figures being 200:439), confirms to a remarkable degree that our previous calculations, in which some of the figures used had to be hypothetical, were broadly correct, since they resulted in

Fifty Years Ago

• The [Trotskyist] Opposition regarded it as scandalous that the [Stalin] government should obtain a high proportion of revenue from the state monopoly of vodka and acquire thereby a vested interest in the drunkenness of the masses. What the government gained as producer of vodka it lost as industrial employer through the inefficiency of drunken workers and a high rate of accidents in industry. The government excused the vodka monopoly on the ground that it combated effectively the even more disastrous mass consumption of home-brewed alcohol. This was admittedly a difficult question. The Opposition proposed that the government should tentatively, as an experiment, suspend the vodka monopoly for a year or two. The majority rejected the proposal. Within the first week of the October Revolution, we remember, the Bolsheviks had to contend with the scourge of mass drunkenness which belonged to the heritage of Mother Russia. Ten years later the scourge was still there; it was used by the rulers as a fiscal convenience and it kept the masses politically befuddled. •

—Isaac Deutscher, *The Prophet Unarmed*

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this same figure of 2.2-fold for the increase in the sale of alcohol over the ten-year period in question.

For example's sake let us recall the amount spent on alcohol in 1970, namely, 23.2 billion rubles. The amount of alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages sold a decade previously is known to us from the yearbook: 11,023 million new rubles. Deducting from this figure the proportion we have calculated for soft drinks, that is, a 24th, or 459 million, we obtain 10.5 billion which is 2.2 times less than the 1970 figure of 23.2 billion. Let us recall that during these ten years the price of alcoholic drinks did not change, so that the increase in the quantity sold corresponded to the increase in the amount spent. Having obtained yet another proof that we were correct in our calculation of the figure for purchases in 1970, we can now confidently compare the sale of alcohol with the sales of other commodities for which the yearbook gives direct figures.

The sale of alcohol gave, in money terms, in 1970, as much as the sale of clothing and underwear together with the sale of butter and other dairy produce (cf., the "Commodity Structure" table, not forgetting that not a word about alcohol is to be found in it). Perhaps, though, the expression "the sale of alcohol *gave*" is not quite correct, for, after all, what it gave it also took—from the population of the U.S.S.R.

We have compared quantities. But what about rates of increase? In rate of increase, purchases of alcohol in the decade 1960-70 were second only to furniture, the purchase of which grew 2.6-fold. We must not forget, however, how many billion were spent on alcohol (23.2) and how many on furniture (3.6, that is, six-and-a-half times less). In comparison with alcohol, furniture appears as quite a secondary commodity—which, moreover, has a saturation point, just as with sewing machines and radio sets. Vodka and wine have no such saturation point: he who drank yesterday will want to drink again today, and, furthermore, he who did *not* drink yesterday may want to drink today. As, indeed, we observe.

There is, though, another item of expenditure that, in rate of increase, falls not far behind vodka. This is "printed publications," i.e., newspapers, magazines, and books, including textbooks. In the decade in question the retail turnover of this item increased 2.16-fold. In absolute amount, however, what was spent on "the wise, the good, the eternal," was only 1.7 billion rubles, or half as much as was spent on furniture, and a 13th as much as was spent on alcohol. Besides, "printed publications" are bought not only by the working people but also by institutions—libraries, schools, and even barber shops—whereas vodka and beer are bought by nobody apart from the workers, office-workers, collective-farmers and intelligentsia of our country. They alone contribute to the consumption of alcohol, which has increased at such a rate.

Alcohol is, indeed, the leading commodity among all those purchased by our people. It has become Commodity Number One, with Number Two ("clothing and underwear") and Number Three ("meat and sausages") lagging behind not by half a length, not by half a billion, but by 9 and 12 billion respectively.

Alcoholic drinks hold the leading position, not only in amount purchased and rate of increase, but also in profitability, which exceeds every other branch of trade. Let us now examine this aspect of the matter, and see what we can find out, despite the deep secrecy surrounding it.

We open our yearbook of the Soviet economy in 1970 at page 601, to find "Indices of State Retail Prices." As compared with 1940, the base year, prices of all foodstuffs, excluding alcohol, had risen to the level of 133 percent. Prices of alcoholic beverages, however, stood at 262 percent of the 1940 level. In other words, the increase in the prices of all other foodstuffs was 33 percent, whereas the price of alcohol had risen 162 percent, or five times as much. Can it for even a moment be supposed that some special increase had occurred in the cost of production of alcoholic drinks, necessitating an increase in their price?

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Of course not. On the contrary, technical progress and the growth of productivity should have reduced, not increased, the cost of producing them. Later on we shall perhaps be able to determine their cost of production fairly accurately, but to start with we need to establish what relation there is between the cost of production of alcoholic drinks and the price at which they are sold. The fact that this price can be raised so simply and easily to any height required tells us that there is no relation at all. During the entire period of 77 years since the state vodka monopoly was introduced, the price has been determined by a variety of considerations, but never by the cost of production.

The *Large Soviet Encyclopaedia* tells us, in the article on "The Wine Monopoly" (2nd edition, Vol. 8, 1951), that "before the First World War the cost of producing all the vodka consumed in one year was 200 million rubles, but the consumers paid 900 million rubles for it." That was written about the Czarist period. Later the encyclopaedia article says that

> vodka prices are fixed by the Soviet state at a level that facilitates the struggle against alcoholism. . . . In the U.S.S.R. the production of vodka is not governed by fiscal purposes and the income obtained from selling it accounts for an insignificant proportion of the state's revenue.

(What is a *significant* and what an *insignificant* proportion? Would it be 10 percent? or 12? or 15?)

What the *Large Soviet Encyclopaedia* says coincides on many points with the statement of Count S. Y. Witte, who was Minister of Finance under Czar Alexander III and his son, Nicholas the Last. The wine monopoly, which he introduced, was, according to him, "essentially a measure intended to reduce drunkenness." When he left the Ministry of Finance, however, the line that he had followed was, he wrote, abruptly changed, and the Ministry now saw the function of the monopoly not as struggle against alcoholism but as

> increasing revenue from the sale of drink. . . . The price of wine was seriously increased. . . . A price was fixed—and has been maintained ever since—which, though accessible to almost everyone, was ruinous for them . . . . This measure considerably increased the revenue from drink.

(Be it noted that "wine," or "grain-wine," was the official name for vodka in those days.) All this can be read in Witte's *Memoirs (Vospominanii,* published by Slovo, 1922, p. 73).

From the information given in the *Large Soviet Encyclopaedia* about the cost of producing vodka before World War I we see that the Czarist government stung the people for seven-ninths—or 78 percent—of the selling price of vodka. We know how much of it was sold in 1913: 118.9 million decaliters. And the government received 900 million rubles, which means that a liter of vodka was sold for 75 kopecks. This was already the increased price that Witte condemned, blaming the Ministry of Finance, from which he had departed long since, for setting itself a fiscal task—increasing state revenue from drink and, without combating drunkenness, ruining the people: a price that was "accessible but ruinous."

Our Soviet state's price cannot, of course, be as exorbitant as the Czarist price (22 percent of which went to the manufacturer, who made a good profit even with that, and 78 percent to the Treasury), for, as the *Large Soviet Encyclopaedia* says, "in the U.S.S.R. the production of vodka is not governed by fiscal purposes." At the same time, though, the price of vodka must be kept, as the encyclopaedia puts it, "at a level that facilitates the struggle against alcoholism," that is, at a fairly high level. What is this level, which, while not pursuing base fiscal aims of profit, nevertheless helps to carry on a high-minded struggle?

Let us see what goes to make up the cost of production of vodka and its price nowadays. In the book *Ekonomika, organizatsiya i planirovaniye spirtovogo proizvodstva* (the economics, organization, and planning of alcohol production), by V. G. Pykhov, published by Pishchevaya Promyshlennost (the Food Industry Press), Moscow 1966, no

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data are given regarding the cost of production of vodka, any more than they are to be found in any other generally accessible work. But in two of the book's tables (on pp. 178 and 201) we find, among other things, the wholesale price of the pure alcohol from which it is made. This is a firm price, fixed by the government in 1954. A factory must strive to reduce its cost of production, and if this is brought down below the wholesale price, the difference constitutes the factory's profit. The state's wholesale price of pure alcohol is, for first-quality rectified spirit, 5 rubles 90 kopecks a decaliter, and for rectified spirit of the highest purity, 6 rubles 10 kopecks a decaliter. Highest-purity rectified spirit, from which vodka is made, needs no further processing, all that has to be done is to dilute it with water. In the remote northern regions of the U.S.S.R., to which pure alcohol is still sent, its transformation into vodka at the consumer's table is effected quite simply: each person dilutes it according to taste, or, more correctly, to capacity. In the factories where liqueur vodkas are produced this procedure is more complicated: in industrial production there is the labor force to be paid, and the technical personnel too, and there are costs of depreciation to be covered.

There is not much published about the vodka industry, and we have to deduce the cost of production of vodka by analogy with pure alcohol production. In this case the raw material accounts, on the average, for 84 percent of the cost, and processing is responsible for the remaining 16 percent. The technology of transforming pure alcohol into vodka is very much simpler than the manufacture of the pure alcohol itself: diluting the stuff, pouring it into bottles, and corking them, that's all there is to it. The making of liqueurs like *pertsovka* or *spotykach* is more complicated, but their relative importance is slight and has little bearing on the matter at hand. Therefore, if we assume for vodka a cost of production half that of pure alcohol, this will be an extremely generous estimate. Let us add a profit, such as that made by the pure alcohol factories. Together, this comes to 16 percent of the price of pure alcohol, and with this addition we obtain the factory price. A decaliter of alcohol, leaving the gates of the vodka factory in new containers, will cost not 6 rubles 10 kopecks but 7 rubles 8 kopecks. But water has been added to the alcohol so that what we have before us now is not, in fact, a decaliter of pure alcohol but 2.5 decaliters of vodka—practically 2.5, that is, maybe a little less, but since we are taking the next higher figure in all these calculations we can neglect the difference. A liter of vodka, fully paid for and also giving a profit to the two enterprises through which it has passed, is now worth 28 kopecks, although we have allowed the vodka factory a very generous cost of production and a healthy profit.

At this stage a fresh metamorphosis, still more striking than the previous chemical changes, takes place in the formation of the price of vodka that is immaterial so far as the consumer is concerned. An increase is effected somewhere along the line, at one of the hardly noticeable halts between the factory and the retail shop. It takes the form of payments to the Treasury, levied by way of an allocation from profits and the turnover tax—which, as textbooks of financial science explain, is certainly not an indirect tax and, indeed, not even any sort of tax at all but merely an allocation to the Treasury.

(Analysis of this question would take us too far from our subject. I have not been able to decide which definition of the turnover tax to accept—that given in the *Large Soviet Encyclopaedia*, or that given in the official textbook. The former tells us [2nd edition, Vol. 29]: "The turnover tax is added as the difference between the retail price (allowing for trade discount) and the wholesale price." But the textbook recommended by the Ministry for use in financial colleges, *Finansy SSSR*, written by a group of authors headed by Professor Allakhverdian, Moscow, 1962, says something quite different: "The turnover tax constitutes the difference between the wholesale price for the industry and the wholesale price for the enterprise." Without trying to find who is closer to the truth in this

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matter, let us stick to the unscientific and simple-minded definition used by every worker: vodka costs the state so-much, but they make us pay so-much. This definition is certainly a lot clearer than "the difference between the wholesale price for the industry and the wholesale price for the enterprise.")

The retail price of a bottle of vodka is just as firm as its wholesale price was. The only difference is that everybody knows the former, but not the latter. And also, of course, the amounts involved.

The retail price must meet the expenses of trade: maintenance of staff, transport, payment for premises, etc. Trade also must make a profit. On the average, trade costs make up 6.24 percent of retail turnover (cf., the table on page 596 of the yearbook of the Soviet economy for 1970). Can this percentage apply in the case of vodka?

This percentage, applied to the cost of vodka such as was sold at an average price, up to 1971, of 5 rubles 50 kopecks a liter (I have taken as my average the price of ordinary vodka: liqueurs were cheaper, but there were also some kinds of vodka that were more expensive than this), would come to 34 kopecks per liter, the factory price of the commodity itself being 28 kopecks. This mark-up recalls all too well the well-known saying: "The heifer on the other shore costs a quarter of a kopeck, but to ferry it over costs a ruble": yet the ferrying of the heifer in this case, which is done by ourselves and not by anyone on "the other shore," actually costs very little. The expenses incurred in the alcohol trade are much lower than in any other branch. Alcohol does not go bad, as meat and butter do, does not turn sour, like milk, does not go out of fashion, like clothes and footwear, does not require such elaborate packing as china and procelain. It has no need of refrigerators. It can be transported easily: in order to transport 10,000 rubles' worth of this commodity, all that is required is one three-ton truck, while 10,000 rubles' worth of the potatoes from which the vodka is made would weigh over 100 tons, for the transport of which 40 three-tonners would be needed. Alcohol does not demand much shop space: a single counter served by one shop assistant will bring a food store a larger trade turnover than ten other counters with ten other shop assistants. And, finally stock-taking—the operation testifying to the degree of trust that our state has learned to place in its trading apparatus—is incomparably easier to carry out where alcohol is concerned, even if it be done every week, than in the case of books or haberdashery. So that application of the average percentage of trade mark-up when selling alcohol is illegitimate. And although we have in every case hitherto allowed a more than sufficient "margin" for every hypothetical magnitude, this time it will be reasonable to assume that trading expenses plus trading profit make up not more than half of the wholesale price of the commodity itself, that is, 14 kopecks a liter.

(The trading organizations themselves probably reckon in a different way. In order to cover their higher expenditure on other goods, they need to add the average mark-up to those that sell profitably, even if the actual cost embodied in "profitable" goods is less than the average. This seems normal so far as trade as a whole is concerned, but wrong when we calculate what a lot the state actually makes out of the sale of alcohol products. In order to accomplish our task, it is essential to differentiate between trading expenses on the basis of the characteristics of each commodity. Accordingly, the trade mark-up of 14 kopecks per liter of vodka, which I have assumed, is not too small, but rather an extremely big mark-up.)

What we arrive at finally is this: a wholesale price for vodka of 28 kopecks a liter, plus 14 kopecks trade mark-up, giving 42 kopecks in all. But the selling price is 5 rubles 50 kopecks. The state's share (not counting the profits taken by the industry and by the trade organizations) is therefore 5 rubles 8 kopecks on every liter, or 92.4 percent of what the consumer pays.

Remembering what the encyclopaedia says about vodka production in our country not serving fiscal aims, let us now estimate how

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much the Treasury gets from the sale of all the vodka produced. About wine and beer we will speak later.

First of all we need to establish the actual dimensions of vodka production, of which the yearbooks have been silent for the last nine years. The table already mentioned, showing the "Dynamic of the Sale of Commodities," from which we learned that the realization of alcoholic beverages had increased 2.2-fold between 1960 and 1970, gave us a general impression, but failed to supply details for each kind of alcohol taken separately. The calculations I propose to undertake start from the figures for the production of vodka alone, which are given in the statistical yearbook, though only for an earlier period. The last year for which this information is supplied is 1962. If we can determine the rate of increase of vodka production in the period 1950-62, we shall possess a certain basis for supposition regarding subsequent developments.

In the first three years of this period the increase was very significant—50 percent (from 62.8 million decaliters to 95.4 million). In the next two years the increase was 22 percent. In 1956 it was 5 percent, in 1957 14 percent, in 1958 3.6 percent. In 1959 production fell by 5.5 percent, but thereafter the rate of increase turned upward: in 1960 it was 0.6 percent, in 1961 5.5 percent, in 1962 11.3 percent. The average annual increase over 12 years was about 9 percent. If, however, we ignore the first half of the 1950s, when the increase was especially vigorous, the average comes to 5 percent. If we take this lower variant as applying in the last ten years, we arrive at the figure of 238 million decaliters of vodka produced in 1970. This means an increase of nearly 50 percent in eight years, since in 1962 the amount produced was 162 million decaliters.

Our hypothetical figure can be checked. To do this we need first to determine the average price of wine—a product that comes in many different varieties with different prices. Starting out from the price of vodka as 5 rubles 50 kopecks a liter and the price of beer as 40 kopecks a liter, it is easy to calculate how much of those drinks was bought in 1960, when the yearbook gave figures for the output of all three kinds of alcohol. For vodka (138.1 million decaliters) and beer (249 million decaliters) the sum expended was 8,590 million rubles. Let us deduct this sum from the total expenditure on alcohol, which we calculated earlier to be 10,564 million rubles. This means that the share of the total represented by wine was 1,974 million rubles. And in that year the amount produced was 77.7 million decaliters. The average price of wine, therefore, was 2 rubles 54 kopecks a liter.

Now we will proceed to the year 1970. First, let us deduct from the total receipts from alcohol (23.2 billion rubles) 4 percent, the proportion by which the price of alcohol was raised in 1970 (cf., the table of indices on p. 601). The resulting figure is 22,272 million. Now, let us deduct the receipts from wine (263 million decaliters) and beer (419 decaliters), amounting together to 8,423 million rubles. What remains is the money received from the sale of vodka. Dividing this by the average price of a decaliter, we find that in 1970, 257 million decaliters of vodka were put on the market—19 million more than we previously calculated, on the basis of an annual growth rate of 5 percent in vodka production. Perhaps rates of increase really were higher than we supposed. There is another possibility, too: as a result of the remarkable extension of winemaking (from 77.7 million decaliters in 1960 to 268 in 1970, a 3.3-fold increase), new and more expensive varieties of wine may have been put on sale, so raising the average price of wine as compared with 1960. It would have been enough to increase this figure by one-and-a-half rubles per decaliter, as compared with 1960, for this to have a marked influence on our calculation.

At all events, this price check shows that the figure of 238 million decaliters was no exaggeration. Remaining faithful to the rule that it is better to underestimate than to overestimate, let us keep to this figure.

In this case, receipts from vodka in 1970 came to 13.1 billion rubles, and the net

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revenue obtained by the Treasury (92.4 percent of the total) to 11.9 billion. This was vodka's contribution to the budget. How much was obtained from the sale of wine and beer? Deducting 13.1 billion from 23.2 billion, we get 10.1 billion rubles. To work out the cost of production of wine would be a sum with too many unknowns in it. Instead, let us make the following calculation. Let us suppose that wine and beer were sold in the shops in 1940, that is, 30 years earlier, at their wholesale price, without any allocations to the budget and without any turnover tax. This did not happen, but let us assume for the moment that it did. In the table of indices already familiar to us, the price prevailing at that time is taken as 100. In the 30 years after 1940, the index for alcohol products rose to 262, whereas their cost of production certainly did not increase, but undoubtedly fell. The increase of 162 percent (index 262 minus 100) therefore represents net revenue to the Treasury. In terms of money, this means 6.2 billion rubles out of the 10.1 billion received for wine and beer. The calculation is very rough, but it is certainly an underestimate, since we can be sure that in 1940 beer and wine were not being sold on a purely philanthropic basis, without any benefit accruing to the budget. Thus, then, vodka contributed to the budget to the tune of 11.9 billion rubles, and wine and beer a good deal less—6.2 billion. Altogether, 18.1 billion. The encyclopaedia was right: 18 billion rubles is only a small proportion of a budget of 156 billion, not quite 12 percent. However, although the price of alcohol is not increased for the sake of gain, but in order to promote the fight against drunkenness, there are no grounds for disdaining the revenue obtained. Say what you like, that amount of money can cover the state's expenditure on public health (9.3 billion) and on science (6.6 billion), and still leave quite a bit in hand.

All our calculations relate to the period up to 1970 inclusive, when an increase in alcohol prices began and the campaign against alcoholism was raised to a higher level, in accordance with the formulation of the *Large Soviet Encyclopaedia*—a level that would enable a struggle to be waged. Whatever commodity may be involved, the consumer possesses one means of reacting to an increase in its price, namely, ceasing to buy the commodity that has become more expensive. This was the reaction expected when the price of alcohol was raised to such a level that, it was assumed, drinkers would cease to buy it, so that drunkenness would then disappear automatically. This expectation must have been based on the assumption that drunkenness was a phenomenon prevalent precisely among the less-well-off strata of the population, and they would cease to buy alcohol because it had become too dear for them. Otherwise, what would be the point of increasing the price of alcohol? The only advantage from it would accrue to the Treasury.

Between increasing the price of alcohol and increasing any other price there is no difference of principle. There is only one essential consideration here—the repercussions that the given measure is expected to have. An increase in the price of meat or butter is not expected to have any favorable repercussions. With vodka it is another matter: making it more expensive is intended to promote the fight against drunkenness, it is a measure of a positive character. Not to mention that, given the scale that the alcohol trade has attained, every 5 percent increase in the price of alcohol brings in cash to the amount of 1 billion rubles, that is, as much as the whole of the dressmaking industry and all the mending done in dressmaking establishments throughout the country. In order to obtain an additional billion from the work of the dressmaking workshops it would be necessary to double the prices they charge, which is unthinkable. To obtain 1 billion from alcohol is so much simpler. A bottle that yesterday cost 2 rubles today costs 2 rubles 10 kopecks—and at the end of the year, 1 billion rubles are lying on the little saucer with the blue border, as Ostap Bender used to say.

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However, by its very nature, an increase in the price of alcohol makes a much stronger impact on the worker's household than would be made by an increase in the cost of communal services. Expenditure on alcohol comes out of the household budget and not out of some abstract pocket or other. In saying this I do not wish to imply that it is wrong to increase the price of alcohol. That is an excellent step on the state's part: the only thing is, it is not clear how it is supposed to help those workers' households where they drink.

But what if the working people have no need of such help? What if the increase in the consumption of alcohol is a natural consequence of increasing prosperity? In a certain sense, this is so. Increased prosperity cannot but result in an increased demand for alcohol. In Czarist Russia, in the 13 years between 1900 and 1913, the demand for vodka per head of population rose by 20 percent (*Large Soviet Encyclopaedia*, 2nd edition, Vol. 2, article on "Alcoholism"). The view has long become established that drunkenness in those days was a consequence of the people's poverty and their hopeless subjection. But for all the scandalous poverty in which the people lived, the Czarist government was able to fix a price for vodka that did not prevent the people from drinking, as Count Witte noted—"a price that was accessible but ruinous." The years after 1905 were years of reaction. In such periods people drink more. And yet the increase in consumption of alcohol was only 20 percent in 13 years. How slow their growth rates were in those days!

The Czarist government did not advertise vodka or call upon the people to drink it. There was even a temperance society. But that government's whole policy in this sphere proceeded from the assumption (though this was usually kept concealed) that drunkenness was an unavoidable evil and that it could be combated only by means of vodka. "Russia's gaiety lies in drinking." And, gradually, this gaiety became transformed into a national calamity.

We, however, are struggling against drunkenness! We are waging this struggle by raising the price of alcohol and restricting the hours between which it can be sold. And yet, despite such effective measures, consumption of alcohol during a ten-year period increased (according to the official evidence of the table, already quoted more than once, "Dynamic of the Sales of Commodities," page 558) 2.2-fold, that is, by 120 percent, or, when reckoned per head of population, by 100 percent.

While an increase in drinking by 20 percent in 13 years corresponded to persistent poverty among the people, the fact that it doubled in 10 years would be unthinkable unless the people had become better off and so able to allow themselves to spend such a lot on alcohol: let me recall that alcohol accounts for 15 percent of all expenditure in state and cooperative shops.

Undoubtedly, increased prosperity is a factor in this. But that improvement has taken place not in a vacuum but amid concrete, historically formed conditions of life. Such an enormous increase in the consumption of a commodity could not have occurred unless the consumers had become addicted to it as something they must have.

Alcohol is a drug. The habit of drug-taking spreads much faster than any other. For this reason, any analogy between the consumption of alcohol in our country and in those countries where they drink wine with their meals, morning, noon, and night (France, for example) is not to be taken seriously. When people drink with their meals a weakish wine made from grapes, which heightens the appetite, this helps them to swallow their food. But when people drink in order to stimulate themselves, a snack helps them to swallow a glass of vodka. For this purpose of self-stimulation a weak wine will not suffice, and so our people do not drink it. The very style in which wine and vodka, respectively, are taken shows the different places these drinks occupy in the use that the people make of them.

Clearly, alcoholic drinks have become an integral part of popular consumption in a

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number of countries. And clearly, at a certain level of development the consumption of alcohol becomes a national calamity. The most important symptom that this is happening, it seems to me, can be seen in the speed with which vodka has become the leading commodity in popular consumption. Having become Commodity Number One, vodka is on its way to becoming also Calamity Number One.

Reading no longer gives any help in this matter. Not in vain has the subject of alcohol completely vanished from the press and is steadily fading even from statistics. And making alcohol more expensive will hardly help, either. It can only lead to the cutting down of other, necessary purchases by those families that have no money to spare, that is, those where such reductions are least to be desired. The increase in the price of alcohol does, of course, also result in a certain *increase* in expenditure on the part of those families that the government wishes to react in this way—those families that have money in reserve. And reserves of money do exist among the people, they are increasing very fast, and there is nothing to be done with them except to put them in the savings bank. A certain transference of investment takes place: some of the money deposited in the savings bank is taken from there and invested in a bottle of vodka that has increased in price. But is *much* money being transferred in this way? Very little, I fancy: the people who drink are not those who go to the savings bank, and those who go to the savings bank are not the ones who send their wives round to the shop to buy a half-liter.

Savings-bank deposits have increased to a remarkable extent in the last five years: from 18.7 billion rubles in 1965 to 46.6 billion in 1970. It would be odd if this were to be explained by increased thriftiness on the part of the Soviet people: thriftiness does not increase two-and-a-half-fold in five years. It would likewise be groundless to suppose that people are saving up to buy particularly expensive articles, such as furniture or motorcycles. If 3.6 billion rubles' worth of furniture is sold and 1.2 billion worth of motorcycles, that certainly confirms that little is available that is worth buying. But what significance have expenditures of this order when you compare them with the amount of money that remains unspent in the savings-bank deposits?

But can the working people manage to buy motorcars? In the commodity-structure table that I have used several times there is not even a column for this item. Another table (on page 587) shows "Commodities of Productive and Economic Importance Made Available for Sale to the Population," and in it we find, after coal, saw-timber and kerosene, 123,000 light cars sold in 1970. (The table shows that 62,000 such cars were sold in 1960 and 64,000 in 1965, 87,000 in 1969 and in 1970 123,000. If we assume that in the years omitted here the number sold was the same as in the years adjacent to them, we get the figure of 800,000 cars sold during the entire 11-year period.) Despite the fact that the working people bought motorcars too, they were unable to spend all their money. This also signifies, no doubt, increased prosperity.

For the sale of cars from the Togliatti works (with a planned annual output of 440,000 cars for the first few years) to even half-fill the "goods-vacuum," these cars would have to be sold at the fantastic price of 50,000 rubles apiece. At the usual prices for cars, which our people have come to accept as normal, the sale of cars brings in a sum slightly larger than the sale of furniture. (I have already compared this with the proceeds from the sale of vodka and shown that it amounts to little in comparison with the billions spent on the latter.)

When talking about the standard of living or the expenditures of the population, we consider the latter as a sort of "average," homogeneous mass. But does vodka attract to itself the money of the same groups of this allegedly homogeneous population as those who put theirs in the savings banks? Certainly not—though statistics give us no information on that point. However, let us look at the table on p. 564, headed: "Average Size of Deposits in Savings Banks in the Different Republics." The lowest average amount is shown for Moldavia—462 rubles. Then, in ascending

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order, come: Kirghizia, Uzbekistan, Tadzhikistan, the R.S.F.S.R., the Ukraine, Kazakhstan and Byelorussia. The average size of deposit ranges from 519 rubles in Kirghizia to 588 rubles in Byelorussia. Thereafter we find a sharp increase—647 in Latvia, 672 in Azerbaidzhan, 688 in Turkmenia—and then another big jump: 806 in Estonia, 964 in Lithuania, 980 in Armenia, 1,016 in Georgia.

It is clearly evident that the largest deposits are found in the republics from which southern fruits are sent to the northern and central parts of the U.S.S.R. and in those where they let rooms and sleeping accommodation to summer vacationers. And, let us note, the prices of fruits, and also those of rooms, are governed by prices fixed by the State, and are subject to the turnover tax.

Turkmenia, Azerbaidzhan, Armenia, and the Baltic republics are far from being the republics where people drink the most. We do not need statistical handbooks to tell us that. In Georgia they have been drinkers since ancient times, theirs is an old wine-growing country, but what they drink, for preference, is wine—and, what is most important, they drink it in their own national manner, which is very different from the manner of drinking customary in Russia since the time of the farming-out of the drink trade and the "wine monopoly."

Statistics provide no key to understanding the reasons why those groups of the working people who put their money in the savings banks are far from coinciding with the ones who invest heavily in bottles of vodka. Though statistics fail to quantify this fact, they do indirectly confirm it. Thereby they confirm that further increases in the price of alcohol, in extracting money from the population, would not affect the money lying in the savings banks, which lies there principally owing to the "goods vacuum." To fill this vacuum by making alcoholic drinks more expensive would probably prove as difficult as to reduce the level of drunkenness by raising the price-level. The solving of both problems is all the more problematical in that on the alcohol front there is another force engaged, with which, though it is not much talked about, it is necessary to reckon very seriously. This is home-distilled vodka—*samogon*. It stands ready in the second echelon: but it does not form part of the high command's reserves—on the contrary, it is not subordinate to the high command at all, and is subject to no planning. Home-distilling has become easier in our time (and the struggle against it made more difficult) because the technology involved is now as simple as can be: no stills are needed for the brewing, saucepans will do.

I have said little about home-distilling: statistics do not take account of it, but this uncontrolled magnitude must not be forgotten. It is capable of upsetting the most optimistic calculations.

If we ignore home-distilling, the visible side of the alcohol trade is easily reducible to figures: so many million bucketsful bring in so much revenue. The reverse, dark side, however, is hard to express in figures, and any such figures can be contested. Even the number of working hours lost through severe hangovers is a doubtful magnitude. Just you prove that it is because of hangovers, and not because the first day, like the first hour, back at work after a break is less productive than those that follow. And, something even more difficult—just you prove that the quantity of material loss inflicted by drunkenness is greater than the material revenue obtained from the sale of vodka.

As for the balance of *spiritual* gains and losses, who shall draw that up? Nobody is interested in doing it. Social statistics, which are prudent enough anyway, are superprudent on that aspect of things. There are not even any real criteria where this question is concerned. What constitutes drunkenness and what does not? Nobody can say.

Therefore, without trying to answer questions whose very formulation leaves open the possibility of answering both yes and no, I have kept to the firm ground of official data, from which I have been able to deduce certain figures where the actual statistics themselves are concealed. The significance of these

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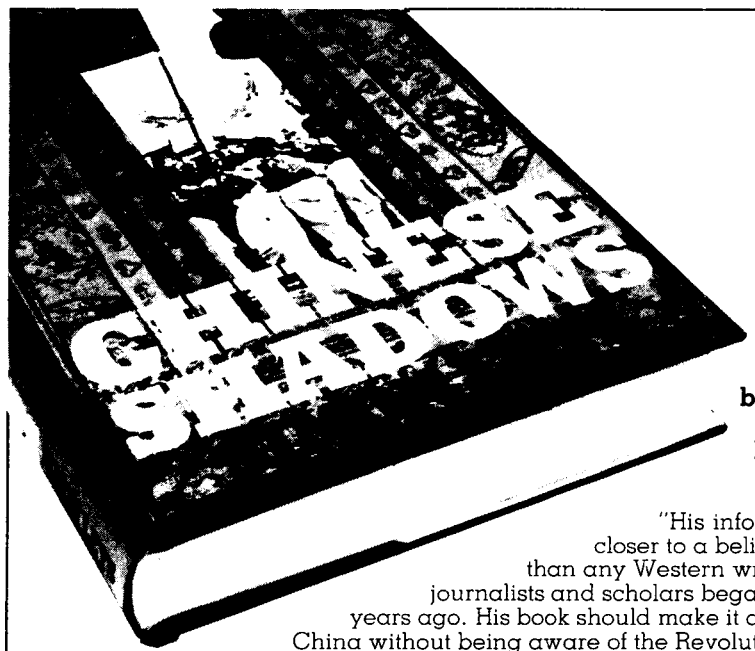
figures is confirmed most convincingly by the very fact that they are concealed. Unimportant facts are not hidden so carefully. On the other hand, the concealment of factual material concerning the question of drink hinders from the outset any attempt to fight against the increase in the consumption of alcohol, for society cannot combat an evil without knowing its locations and its dimensions. But can we be certain that the growth in the consumption of alcohol is really regarded as an evil?

Fighting against the increasing consumption of alcohol is like Don Quixote's campaign against the windmills. Sensible people don't engage in such tomfoolery. Cervantes did not need to tell us what the miller was doing while the Knight galloped, spurring Rosinante, toward his mill. We know it without being told: the miller was calmly pouring corn onto the millstone. What seemed to Don Quixote a wicked giant was to the miller a means of livelihood.

The increase in the consumption of alcohol has become transformed before our eyes into an uncontrollable process. And a problem that arises entirely from a process that cannot be controlled cannot be solved, either. Such processes are utilized, so far as this can be managed—and that's all. The miller never thinks of governing the wind and struggling against it. All he can do is turn his mill so that its sails get as much wind as possible in them.

Turning the sails of a windmill into the wind does not mean going against the wind.

—*Translated from the Russian by* BRIAN PEARCE ◻



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Michael Harrington

Problems & Paradoxes of the Third World

I

Let me begin this outline of the institutions of international inequity with a few definitions. That is not a matter of formalities, but it touches upon a fundamental, underlying concept: *that underdevelopment is not a "thing."*

What is critical to underdevelopment is not some physical fact but a world economic structure that perpetuates backwardness. For instance, it is often said that the poor countries suffer because they are agricultural and raw-material, rather than industrial, producers. But, then, wheat is a "primary" commodity and one of the most important American exports. That business is dominated by five firms, which control 85 percent of the grain shipments abroad. Two of them, Cargill and Continental, each have 25 percent of the market, and if Cargill weren't a privately held company, it would be the 27th-largest corporation among *Fortune's* 500 industrials, outranking Bethlehem Steel and Lockheed. Both Continental and Cargill are currently involved in a scandal that charges that they did, among other things, "embezzle, steal, take away and conceal by fraud with intent to convert to their own use" grain bought by India.

It should not have come as a surprise, then, that Jimmy Carter's Secretary of Agriculture Bob Bergland proposed what might be called the Organization of Wheat Exporting Countries in 1977. Modeling himself on OPEC, Bergland proposed that the United States and Canada, which control 75 percent of the commercial wheat exports, should join together to set the world price. The purpose of this move, as Bergland described it, was to "shave off the peaks and valleys" of fluctuating wheat prices, i.e., to do for the First World commodity precisely what the Third World wants to do for their commodities. When challenged on the grounds that this policy would violate basic American principles, Bergland correctly replied that the idea of an international free market is a "dream world." He did not, of course, add that the United States has used all of its power for a generation to force the poor of the globe to observe the rules of that dream.

In short, wheat functions within the American economy just like any other oligopoly product and promotes general economic growth as much as a sophisticated manufactured item. So, to take another example, what differentiates American from Egyptian cotton is not the boll but the economic structure within which it is grown.

The Third World, another argument says, is composed of countries dominated by foreign capital; the advanced economies are not. Only India has a relatively low percentage of foreign investment, and is abysmally poor, while Canada leads the world as a "host" to moneys from abroad and is affluent. The United States, according to one 1973 report, owns 45 percent of Canada's manufac-

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ture, 56 percent of its mining and smelting, and 60 percent of its oil and natural gas. That, I think, is intolerable on many grounds but does not make Canada impoverished any more than India's relative freedom from foreign investment makes it wealthy. It is not the presence or absence of foreign investment that is decisive but the way in which the society is organized. The same amount of money, even an identical plant, can have a completely different effect in two different national systems. It's the system that's crucial.

Industrialization, some believe, is the sign of a developed economy. But then Hong Kong is more industrialized than the United States, since it devotes 41.4 percent of its labor force and 38 percent of its output to manufacture, while the corresponding figures for this country are 26.5 percent and 28 percent. Only Hong Kong specializes in the low-wage production of products that are no longer profitable for the better-paid labor force and high technology of the United States. So it is not industrialization per se, but its type and the nature of the economy in which it occurs that are critical.

Finally, it is well known that it is the superior productivity of the factories in the metropolitan centers that guarantee their advantage as against the more backward technology of the periphery. After all, not only Marx but also Adam Smith and David Ricardo insisted on the point—and in any case it makes good sense. Indeed, it was once true: only, it does not hold now. Writing on the basis of 1966 figures, Samir Amin estimated that of $35 billion in underdeveloped-country exports, $26 billion, or just under 75 percent, came from ultramodern sectors. A brand-new, highly innovative plant will have a cumulative and integrated expansionary effect in the United States; in India, or even in Brazil, it will create an enclave of modernity, and the "spread effects" will be limited.

Thus, a 1972 World Bank study found that the productivity of labor and capital in some of the poor countries is *higher* than in the advanced economies—one more stunning refutation of the thesis that the structure of the world economy is determined by "natural" disadvantages. When it is profitable to do so, multinationals demonstrate that the people of the South can run the best machines of the North.

So, underdevelopment cannot be defined in terms of "things"—of agriculture or industry or foreign capital or productivity. It is an economic structure that gives these "things" a perverse quality, which they do not possess in an advanced society. Therefore, there is a limited value to an inventory of the characteristics of the South. It is true that most of these societies tend to experience urbanization without industrialization and therefore produce huge slums on the edges of their cities; that the most export-oriented among them tend to be specialized in one or two commodities and so are extremely vulnerable to fluctuations in just a few markets; that income and wealth are even more badly distributed in poor nations than in rich; and so on. One can compile almost endless lists of aspects of underdevelopment—lists that are all but worthless if the dynamic in which they function is ignored.

For example, Simon Kuznets, a man of enormous and genuine accomplishment in his field, summarizes the marks of underdevelopment but omits to even mention the international domination of the South, which trades mainly with the rich, who trade mainly among themselves. This error is typical of academic social science, even when practiced by a genius like Kuznets. One classifies, but without illuminating the concepts that make the definitions possible; one identifies hidden empirical uniformities, sometimes showing great ingenuity in the process, but they are then assumed to be their own explanation rather than that which is to be explained. As Hegel said of this procedure long ago, it presents the table of contents and dispenses with the book. Thus, I will not concentrate on sorting out the characteristics that afflict the South but will proceed toward the analysis of the structures that give the characteristics their meaning.

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II

There is a historical thesis that applies most particularly to Africa but is also relevant to the rest of the Third World: *the structure of underdevelopment today results from a growth process that was induced form the outside rather than generated from within.*

There is still a hot academic debate over exactly how and why capitalism developed *within* feudalism, eventually replacing that system. But there is no doubt that it was, in the main, an internal process. That transition was hardly a harmonious, peaceful affair. It was carried out at the cost of great human suffering, was punctuated by rising civil wars and restorations, and was culminated in huge, dirty, disease-ridden cities. Some of its equilibrium mechanisms were grisly: cholera helped maintain a rough balance between available humans and job openings. And yet, although the transformation was not planned, it had an inner logic that came from the emergent system itself. To put a complicated and crucial idea in compressed form, the social forces that dispossessed peasants were also creating a need for a working class that was recruited from their ranks.

John Hicks, an eminent mainstream economist, points out that innovation was often labor-saving during the Industrial Revolution. That created unemployment; it also gave rise to profits, which would finance expansion and increase the demand for labor. But the situation is quite different in the international economy, even during the heyday of Free Trade:

> For the labor that is thrown out may be in one country and the expansion in demand for labor, which is the effect of the accumulation of capital that results, may be in another. The English weavers, who were replaced by the textile machinery, could (in the end and after much travail) find re-employment in England; but what of the Indian weavers who were displaced by the same improvement?

Let's generalize this point. Growth in the periphery was stimulated by the penetration of alien capital into a stagnant economy. Only part of the society was drawn into the web of monetary relations—the part that was brought to life to serve some of the specific needs of the metropolitan power. If the peasant in this sector did acquire some buying power in the process, he did not spend it on the home market, which did not exist. He had to import. Within European or American capitalism, the exchange between the city and the countryside had a multiplier effect throughout the entire society; on the periphery, the city and the countryside were two different nations.

Moreover, in Europe, capitalism marked the triumph of the industrialist over the landlord, of profits (which are the reward for energetic entrepreneurs) over rents, the return to passive, parasitic landlords (of whom Ricardo contemptuously said, they grow rich in their sleep). But on the periphery, local wealth, if it existed, tended to be land, and it was the rent collectors who benefited from the partial commercialization of agriculture. They spent their gains, not on investing in national capitalism but in importing luxury goods from the advanced economy. However, it should be noted that this selfish, wasteful decision was quite rational in such a society.

Given the limited domestic market on the periphery, there was no basis for a vigorous internal industrialization. So why invest? And when investment did take place, it was complementary to that of foreign capital, not competitive with it. When this process began, the real wages at the center and at the periphery were roughly equal—that is, they were subsistence wages. Then, as the outsiders penetrated more deeply into the economy, ruining the artisanate with cheap manufactured goods but not, as in Europe, providing new employment for those thus displaced, there was a tremendous "oversupply" of labor. This, it should be noted, is not a demographic fact of nature but an artificial construct of the way in which development was introduced from without. As a result, the wage gap between center and periphery began to widen, and made an internally sustained development even more of an impossibility.

One way of dealing with this complex

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process is to reduce it to one of those abstractions that classify in the guise of explaining. The underdeveloped society, we are told, is "dualistic." That can be put in a number of ways. Economists focus upon the great differences in productivity between the sectors; sociologists describe the "traditional" and "modern" spheres and speculate on how the rigidities of the former inhibit the emergence of the latter. Sometimes, these definitions are actually put into the context of a dynamic theory, one that sees dualism as a necessary stage on the road to development.

But what the dualism notion sorely misses is any concept of the whole. From the point of view of foreign capital, the traditional and modern sectors of the underdeveloped economy are marvelously integrated. The subsistence farming, extended family practices, and the constant back-and-forth movement between the traditional spheres are precisely what make it possible to have such low wages in the modern sphere. Moreover, a point that both Marx and Lenin failed to understand, the metropolitan nation does not want an industrialized competitor on the periphery. The "dualism" within the underdeveloped society is thus an integrating element for the world market. It helps to keep everyone in his "proper place."

One way of summarizing the present impact of these historical trends is to say: *underdeveloped societies are not internally coherent.*

Hyla Myint defined this insight from a mainstream economic perspective; his point of view is, on this count, the same as that of the neo-Marxists. The precapitalist traditional societies were poor, stagnant, and backward, but they did not suffer from economic discontent and frustration, because "wants and activities were on the whole adapted to each other, and the people were in equilibrium with their environment." But once they were "opened up," that coherence was destroyed. A nutrition expert gives an example. The Mayans in Guatemala lived on corn and beans, supplemented by fruits, vegetables, and meat from wild animals. They were even careful to allow tilled patches of forest to lie fallow so that they could reconstitute themselves. Then the Spaniards came. They cleared the ground for coffee and beef and thereby destroyed the possibility of an adequate diet; their progress brought malnutrition.

Samir Amin makes the same point with regard to India:

> Precolonial India was a society (or societies) which was coherent, characterized by a correspondence between its various structures economic and others) and which, for this reason, could be analyzed and understood in itself. Modern India is incomprehensible outside of its eternal relations.

Obviously all nations, even the most powerful, are part of an interconnected world system. American secretaries of state never weary of emphasizing that fact when they want to urge moderation on the Third World. They do not add that the economic structures of some nations—the advanced capitalist powers, for the most part—are determined by *their own history* and therefore are structurally interrelated; while the economic structures of other nations—the poor—were determined by alien history and lack an internal coherence of their own.

Here is Samir Amin's description of the contemporary result of all this:

> the "developed" economy constitutes an integrated whole, characterized by a flow of internal exchanges which are quite dense, while the flow of external exchanges of the atoms which compose the whole are, in the main, marginal compared to the internal exchanges. By contrast, the "underdeveloped" economy is composed of atoms which are, relatively speaking, juxtaposed, not integrated, and the density of the external exchange of these atoms is relatively greater than that of the internal exchanges.

Therefore, Amin concludes, you cannot really speak of "national" economies in the poor world. There is a national economic space, but, economically speaking, not a nation.

So it is that these structures give rise to a vicious circle, a coherent incoherence. As Ragnar Nurske described the process, on the supply side there is a low rate of capital

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saving, because there are low incomes because there is low productivity (throughout the entire economy but not in the modern export sector) because there is not enough capital. And on the demand side, there is no inducement to invest, because of the low buying power in the society as a result of the low productivity that derives from the lack of capital, which results from the fact that there is no inducement to invest.

This first theory, then, emphasizes the historical genesis of underdevelopment as a crucial factor in giving it the structure it has today. Because growth is induced from the outside, and not from within, the economy becomes subordinate to the foreign capital that called it into a new life. It therefore lacks the reciprocal interactions that are necessary if there is to be self-sustained growth. This system is disintegrative from the point of view of those who live in it, and integrative from the perspective of those who dominate the world. Next, we shall see how the resultant alien priorities are often internalized by those whom they afflict. This is not necessarily because these people have "sold out"; it is also because the foreign priorities, and only they, make sense in a framework that was designed to accommodate and perpetuate them. In short, it becomes rational to be irrational—for the leadership of a poor country to voluntarily preserve the conditions of its own economic inferiority.

III

This thesis was developed primarily in response to Latin-American history, although it applies to countries throughout the world: *the upper classes in the impoverished lands often subordinate themselves, politically and culturally, to rulers of the affluent countries.*

Between the 1820s and the 1850s, some of the newly independent Latin-American countries seemed to be heading toward a classic capitalist takeoff. There were domestic industries, national-flag shipping, some of the old mines were opened up under local ownership, and so on. But that trend was frustrated, and one of the reasons had to do with the lineup of social class forces within the countries involved. This factor is at work to this very day.

One way of putting the historical point is to say that in much of Latin America, the South won the equivalent of our Civil War. Three basic classes confronted one another. The agricultural, mining, and commercial interests wanted to keep an export-oriented structure, for the obvious reason that it would bring them profit. This, in North American terms, was the Confederate, or Free Trade, party. Then there were the industrializers who, like the Union forces in the United States, stood for protectionism. And finally, there were the British, who in this case, as in our Civil War, supported the Southerners. The British Foreign Secretary Canning put the matter with cynical candor in 1824. "Spanish America," he said, "is free; and if we do not mismanage our affairs sadly, she is English." That is, Canning was shrewd enough to understand the truth that became so apparent after the post-World War II decolonizations: that national and economic independence are by no means synonymous, that political freedom can be a mask for material subjection.

The South won in Latin America. As Andre Frank describes part of that event,

> The metropolitan powers aided their Latin-American junior trade partners with arms, naval blockades and, where necessary, direct military intervention and instigation of new wars, such as that against Paraguay, which lost six out of seven members of its male population in the defense of its nationally financed railroad and genuinely independent, autonomously generated development effort.

Even so, a country like Argentina, Karl Deutsch notes, had a high standard of living in 1900. But once again, the merchants and landlords made an alliance with the imperial interests in the advanced economies and frustrated their own economic independence.

This pattern persists to this day, but now it has a cultural, as well as an economic, dimension. As Celso Furtado, a brilliant Latin analyst of underdevelopment, has

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emphasized, in these countries the living standards of the upper classes are based on those of the affluent in the richest economies. They satisfy their desires in one of two ways, both of them profoundly antidevelopmental. Either they import luxury goods, which is an enormous drain on hard currency and channels needed resources into domestic waste and foreign profit; or, when the tactic of "import substitution" is adopted as a way of achieving internal growth, the upper class's tastes still decide what is going to be produced. Now, instead of importing their luxuries, they see to it that they are manufactured locally. The problem is that the capital intensity of such undertakings—the technological investment per worker—is thereby determined, not by the needs of the poor society, but by the reflected priorities of the rich in the advanced countries.

Furtado's insight was elaborated to deal with the Latin-American evidence. Yet the process that he identified is at work in India. And it is an important fact of life throughout the Third World that the richer are richer there than in the affluent economies. In Kuznets's estimate, the top 5 percent in the underdeveloped nations get between 30 percent and 40 percent of before-tax cash income. This is not merely a sign of maldistributed wealth; it is also a mechanism for imposing the desires of that parasitic class upon the society in a way that works against development.

Latin America, then, helped to lock itself into a relationship of dependency upon the major powers. Through the connivance of the conservative section of its own upper class with an imperial bourgeoisie in the advanced countries, it "voluntarily" accepted an emphasis upon an export production that offered gains for some but only involved the most minimal changes in production methods. The advanced countries got the dynamic sectors; Latin America had plantations, mines, and industrial enclaves. And in more recent times, the Latin ruling classes have reinforced this pattern by a cultural mimicry that had further antidevelopmental effects.

These structures laid the basis for an important and dramatic phenomenon of the post-World War II years: *the flow of money from the poor to the rich.*

IV

The way in which the terms of trade have transferred wealth from the impoverished to the affluent during the post-World War II years was the great discovery of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). The research was done by scholars like Raoul Prebish, UNCTAD's first secretary general, and Celso Furtado. It then became a central political theme of Third World diplomats and it is the theoretical inspiration for one of their central demands, a system that would smooth out the wild fluctuations in commodity prices. This thesis contains a most important truth, but it is sometimes overgeneralized.

According to the International Monetary Fund and the UN's Economic Commission on Latin America, between 1951 and 1966, taking 1950 as a base year for prices and omitting Cuba from the calculation, the Latin-American countries lost $26.3 billion through a deterioration in the terms of trade. That means that the prices received for their exports fell, and those paid for imports rose, with a resultant gap of $26.3 billion. This phenomenon, it should be noted, is recognized by both radical and mainstream theorists, and one anti-Marxist writer even argues that the traditionalists identified it first, with the left only belatedly picking up, and exaggerating, their finding.

These data must be used carefully, which is not always the case. On the one hand, neo-Leninists have sometimes used this thesis casually, without even noting that it contradicts the central assertion in Lenin's analysis: that the developed capitalisms must export capital, not, as in this case, import it. On the other hand, UNCTAD writers sometimes argue as if this is *the* mechanism promoting underdevelopment. This overlooks the fact that, during long periods in the 19th and 20th centuries, the terms of trade were favorable to the poor countries and that,

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as Ernest Mandel has pointed out, the corporations importing raw materials in the metropolitan countries worked hard to see that this would be so. The point is that even then the poor countries did not escape from their inferiority, but only reinforced it.

And then, if one makes the terms of trade the prime, or sole, villain, this implies that if only "fair" prices are paid for Southern exports, then the problem of world poverty will be solved. In fact, the relative poverty of the poor countries was not significantly affected by the good years in the early '70s. Indeed, that will become even more dramatically apparent when we look at financial flows in a moment.

But we do have solid figures showing that, since 1953, the terms of trade have usually been turned against the starving and in favor of the affluent. Moreover, it is at least possible that the post-World War II period marks a structural change in the world economy. The system is now dominated by gigantic multinational corporations with an enormous ability to control prices, jump over the tariff walls of the impoverished in order to rob them of their "comparative advantage," and discover synthetic substitutions for primary commodities that weaken the latter's market position. At the least, even if one denies that such a permanent shift has taken place, it is clear that the international economy has been transferring resources from the desperate to the privileged during the better part of the last generation. And one instrument of that outrage is found in the terms of trade.

A second, and related, point is that foreigners control a significant share of the economic activity in the poor lands. This has many consequences, some of which will surface in a discussion of Brazil later on in this chapter. However, the aspect of this reality that is particularly relevant here has to do with the export of profits from the periphery to the center. For instance, between 1950 and 1965, United States direct investment in Latin America amounted to $3.8 billion, and income going back to this country added up to $11.3 billion. That was a clear gain of $7.5 billion for the United States over a 15-year period.

Repatriated profits are, however, only the most obvious part of this perverse flow of wealth. The Third World nations have to pay, in licensing fees and other ways, for the technology that they get from the rich. The UN currently estimates that charge at between 3 and 5 billion dollars a year. If the "demonstration effect"—that cultural mimicry of affluent waste and luxury—is at work, that charge may include hard currency paid out for the "proprietary knowledge" of how to make Colonel Sanders' Kentucky Fried Chicken. (I have in mind a Sanders' outlet on Kenyatta Boulevard in Nairobi.)

Finally, a vicious circle is set in motion. Because of the losses suffered through the unfavorable terms of trade and the outflow of profit and fees to the advanced economies, the Third World finds itself short of cash. Note that it is not that they have failed to produce substantial wealth. They have. Only, the structure of the world market has, by perfectly legal means, taken billions of that wealth away from them. So they have to borrow. This became a particularly acute problem in the '70s, when the quadrupled price of oil hit the balance-of-payments situation of the nonpetroleum poor countries harder than anyone else. In 1973, their deficit was $12 billion; in 1975, $45 billion; and it is expected to stay in that latter range for the foreseeable future.

Wassily Leontiev's UN Commission provides a summary and stunning statistic. In 1970, the underdeveloped countries had a net capital inflow of $2.6 billion, but paid out $7.9 billion on foreign investments. In short, they lost $5.3 billion.

V

There is an exceedingly complex theory that offers another important insight into underdevelopment. It is based on a huge, easily accessible fact: that wages in the Third World are but a fraction of those in the advanced economies, yet about two-thirds of the exports from the poor countries are produced

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under conditions of extremely high productivity. *These low-wage and high-productivity sectors are another mechanism for the transfer of wealth from the hungry to the affluent.*

In the classical theory of foreign trade, it was understood—by Ricardo as well as by Marx—that a certain unequal exchange was taking place. Crudely put, but I think accurately, a country with very high productivity received a bonus from a country with low productivity, for the latter had to work much harder, to surrender more hours of labor time, in an exchange with the former. The advanced economy benefited from its technological edge. That concept is more than a century and a half old and even the mainstream economists use it—adding that all, including the poor low-productivity nations, benefit from this unfair exchange.

There is, a neo-Marxist theory holds, a new form of exploitation that differs from this classic case. When United Fruit goes into Central America, Unilever into Malaysia, Firestone into Africa, they operate with the most modern methods. And yet the wages in such countries average from 4 percent to 15 percent of those in the United States. What has to be explained, as the French writer A. Emmanuel puts it, is not the difference between the wage of an American metalworker who uses a million-dollar press and the wage of a Brazilian plantation worker who wields a machete. It is easy enough to find reasons, both good and bad, for that gap. But why does a mason who builds a suburban New York bungalow get three times as much pay as a Lebanese who builds the same house in the same way?

I will only note that there are important parts of Emannuel's answer that I think are wrong—an overly facile analogizing of Marx's theory of "prices of production" within a national economy to the world economy; a tendency to see high wages in the North as the prime cause of low wages in the South, and to pit workers in those areas against one another; and so on. But the question is brilliant, and so is part of his response (as well as the explication of it by Samir Amin). The critical point is that the high-productivity sectors of the Third World exist within societies dominated by subsistence economy. Therefore, labor is cheap.

Up until the 1880s, wages in the emergent capitalist powers of Europe fluctuated around the subsistence level, too. The classical economist Jevons computed that real wages in ancient Greece were roughly comparable to what an unskilled worker received in the 19th century. But then laissez faire came to an effective end, monopoly took over, price competition became less important, and capitalism took giant strides toward the periphery. Under these circumstances, the workers were able to organize and increase their wages. Meanwhile, the pay in the poor countries, as Hyla Myint put it, "fossilized." The result was not simply a personal injustice to people who, in the foreign-owned or -controlled sectors were very productive, but one more profound inhibition to economic development.

The point has been dramatically annotated by Amin. The 1966 exports of the Third World were worth $35 billion on the market. If the workers in those economies had been paid at the rates prevailing in advanced countries, the value would have been $57 billion. As a result, there were those who were thus enabled to sell these cheap goods at high prices—for the most part, the multinational corporations, which run the modern industries in poor countries. They received from underpaid workers a subsidy worth $22 billion in a single year. This transfer, Amin very rightly emphasizes, is "marginal" for the metropolitan powers at the center. It is *not* the cause of their prosperity, which is what Emmanuel implies. But that same transfer is of disastrous consequence for the poor.

Let me translate these abstractions into a homely example. An American employer, say a dress manufacturer or a producer of consumer electronics, ships work to Mexico or Taiwan or Hong Kong. The wage bill drops enormously; but the price of the product, when it is reimported into the United States,

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does not. It is sold at levels appropriate to an automobile-buying, steak-eating economy; it is manufactured by the consumers of tortillas and rice. If, however, that "host" country wants to import American goods, whether they be luxuries for the ruling classes or machines for industrialization, it must pay auto-and-steak prices for them.

In a capitalist power during the period of industrialization, low wages were a perverse blessing. They were the source of the high profits, which were invested in development, which eventually created both a militant working class and a level of production capable of satisfying at least some of its demands. But in the Third World enclaves of modernity, one gets sudden injections of high technology into otherwise backward, subsistence societies. Part of the profits are siphoned off by the multinationals, by means of high prices and low wages. And even if the government gets a portion of that subsidy, the conditions for reinvesting it are not at all favorable, since there is no proportionality between productivity and the effective ability of the society to consume, between the modern enclave and the traditional society. Here again, it is the structure that is decisive: low wages had a positive effect in the North, but they institutionalize underdevelopment in the South.

Finally, the surplus population that inhibits development in the poor countries has a by-product that contributes to the affluence of the rich nations. The superfluous workers from the Third World are forced to migrate temporarily from the periphery to the center. In West Germany, they are called *Gastarbeiter* ("guest workers"), a euphemism if ever there was one. In 1971, there were 3 million of them in that country, mainly recruited from the impoverished Southern fringe of Europe (Spain, Portugal, Greece, Yugoslavia—Austrian, Dutch, and French workers were not juridically treated in this category). Typically, they worked cleaning streets, digging graves, collecting garbage and, the women among them, as chars. They are extremely useful as a labor reserve, since they can be sent home in fairly short order when there is an economic downturn, and this saves the society the welfare cost of normal domestic unemployment. . . .

The phenomenon of "surplus" population in the Third World, then, does not merely mean that the First World contracts its dirty work out to the periphery. That is often the case, of course. But in addition, we import these people into the wealthy societies, and thus recreate the international caste system within the very heart of those economies that like to refer to themselves as "advanced."

VI

Finally, Brazil presents a particularly compelling example of these trends in action. It is the largest and potentially richest of all the underdeveloped nations. If even Brazil exhibits the mechanisms I have just described, then the overwhelming majority of the poor countries, which do not have such favorable auspices, are certainly subject to them.

For the *Wall Street Journal,* the difference between Brazil and Peru (before the latter abandoned its military radicalism and succumbed to the power of the international bankers) is that "Brazil has opted to tie its economic future to the market economy instead of pursuing the grail of state socialism." To be sure, the *Journal* adds, this dictatorship has "serious political and social shortcomings" (a euphemism for dictatorship and torture—which calls to mind the Soviet description of a quarter of a century of totalitarian terror as the "cult of the personality"). But Brazil is basically on the right track. Its "prescription for economic equality is not to equalize misery, as so many of the socialist governments do, but to increase production for the eventual benefit of everyone."

That is dreamy, dogmatic nonsense. Consider just a few of the facts.

In 1976, the *New York Times* reported that Brazil's $2 billion debt now required 40 percent of export income for servicing. One reason, the *Times* said, was that during the boom period—the "miracle" of 10 percent annual growth that ended with the oil crisis of late 1973—there was such an inflow of imports that the external-debt charges

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mounted rapidly. Consumer and industrial goods were brought in at a reckless pace in a way that provided excellent documentation for Celso Furtado's description of how Latin elites behave.

For instance, Brazil increased the production of cars until it became the world's ninth-ranking automotive industry, with almost a million vehicles a year being produced in the '70s. But while the number of autos and television sets was climbing at an annual rate of 14 percent, meat and homes with electricity went up by a mere 3 percent a year. The present finance minister put the issue candidly:

> A transfer of income from the richest 20 percent to the poorest 80 percent probably would increase the demand for food, but diminish the demand for automobiles. The result of a sudden redistribution would be merely to generate inflation in the food-producing sector and excess capacity in the car industry.

At the same time, foreign domination was proceeding apace, so much so that the nationalistic right wing was as disturbed as the left. Foreign multinationals controlled 100 percent of auto production; 94 percent of pharmaceuticals, 91 percent of tobacco, 82 percent of rubber. A progovernment politician, José Machado, argued that therefore the state must take over the import of agricultural products and all raw materials for the pharmaceutical industry, and should nationalize the biggest utility and establish a state monopoly over newly discovered iron-ore deposits now being jointly exploited by the government and U.S. Steel. But then, Machado's proposals were not a mere burst of angry rhetoric. By some estimates, government manufacture already accounts for one half of total investment as compared to 15 percent at the end of World War II. Government mills produce 60 percent of the raw steel and monopolize the production of flat-steel products, rails, and heavy steel shapes. The debate in Brazil, the *Times* reported, is not about free enterprise but over the amount of government enterprise under state capitalism.

"What irony," a retired Brazilian admiral complained. "We are establishing Communism under the flag of anti-Communism."

Meanwhile, as foreign debt rose and government intervention into the economy deepened, real wages declined steadily. In theory, the workers' pay was "indexed"—that is, regularly adjusted upward to compensate for inflation. But in the first period of this policy, which ended in 1967, the real minimum wage declined by 16 percent. And between 1967 and 1972, wages advanced at a rate that was only two-thirds that of productivity increases. Between 1960 and 1970, according to one scholarly estimate, the share of the wealthiest 3.5 percent in the national income rose from one-fourth to one-third; that of the bottom 43 percent declined from 11 percent to 8 percent. This heightened exploitation of the working class was one of the chief sources of the "miracle." It was also a phenomenon that disturbed businessmen in the United States who favor American, not Brazilian, exploitation of Brazilian workers.

Another *New York Times* dispatch focused on a classic case in point. A Brazilian shoe manufacturer got a subsidy from the government to start a business, and he succeeded. One reason was that he paid 50 cents an hour, as against a $3.50 wage in the United States. In considerable measure his ability to hire people so cheaply was a function of a repressive regime, which outlawed strikes and genuine labor organizations. So, a Brazilian was going to take advantage of the unequal exchange that is so profitable for American multinationals. The latter responded with protectionist pressure on their government. Jonathan Kendell of the *New York Times* commented:

> The phenomenal growth of Brazilian shoe exports goes to the heart of one of the most troubling economic questions in the world—that is, how can an underdeveloped nation observe the present rules of international trade and still forge new exports capable of penetrating the markets of the industrialized countries and earning the vast quantity of foreign exchange needed to fuel further economic growth?

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So, the "miracle" was up against severe difficulties in the industrial sector, even with the fascistic exploitation of the workers. But the rural areas, where the bulk of the people live, are more seriously menaced by structural problems. As one Brazilian economist, a former banker, described the situation in 1976, "The immediate objectives of attending to the needs of our foreign markets have made us forget the principal problem. That is, agriculture for the domestic market remains inefficient and expensive and has few prospects of overcoming this rut." To translate this generality into numbers, the OECD reports that 60 percent of the people in Brazil exist at levels under the FAO caloric minimum for health. It also noted that the minority with incomes more than double those of the 60 percent eat like citizens of the most affluent countries. Here again, the upper class lives in the First World, the masses live in the Third World.

Indeed, in 1976 there were riots in Brazil, as people fought to get scarce black beans—even though agricultural production had increased. The government had concentrated on cash crops for the world market, and bean production in 1976 had declined by 17 percent, in part because of bad weather, but also because the bean growers got only 1 percent of the subsidy that went to the export farmers. As a result, food prices went up, infant mortality soared because of inferior prenatal diets, and 40 percent of the population, in the most "successful" of the developing countries, suffered from malnutrition.

At the same time, the Amazon is being deforested as part of a development scheme. The government is giving massive subsidies to multinational corporations like Anderson Clayton, Goodyear, Volkswagen, Nestlé, Liquigas, Borden, Mitshubishi, and Universal Tank Ship, to turn the area into a major supplier of beef for Europe, the United States, and Japan. On the basis of past experience, the complete success of this undertaking, involving a major increase in the meat output of Brazil, will probably be accompanied by more hunger among the Brazilian people.

In other words, subordination to the priorities of the advanced powers in agriculture brought an increase in hunger and malnutrition. By the end of 1976, these various troubles had brought a formal end to the "miracle." President Ernesto Geisel announced a regime of austerity and projected a decline in real growth from 8 percent to 4 percent, in part because of the 2.3-billion-dollar trade deficit. So, more than a decade of widely heralded progress did not change Brazil's structural inferiority. It remains dominated by foreign corporations, its policies determined by foreign creditors, and its agricultural planning has been a disaster for the rural millions. A terrorized and exploited working class is the source of enormous gain, but businessmen in the United States want those 50-cents-an-hour factory hands subordinated to North American purposes and profits. Our multinationals want that underpaid labor so much that they work to keep the Brazilians from appropriating it themselves.

The case of Brazil, then, corroborates our basic analysis. If proper account is taken of the historical differences between the poor nations and the various levels of misery within the Third and Fourth Worlds, there is a common mechanism that keeps these countries in a structurally subordinate position in the global economy. They were denied the experience of self-generating growth; they were called into modern economic life by aliens; and for that reason their internal and external relationships are shaped so as to inhibit development.

Even a nation as richly endowed as Brazil can experience more than a decade of burgeoning national production and yet remain humiliatingly subject to political power in Washington and economic power throughout the advanced capitalist system. The poor countries, then, and even the most "middle-class" among them, like Brazil, are condemned within the present structure of the world market to a labor of Sisyphus. They progress into their own inferiority, they grow into further dependency. □

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Toby Cohen

Medicaid Fraud Reconsidered

How the Hospitals Got on Welfare

A year ago, Senator Frank E. Moss of Utah made headlines when he revealed that he and some of his staff members had posed as patients in New York City "Medicaid mills," where they received unnecessary tests and treatment. In his press conference the Senator suggested that Medicaid fraud might be costing the City $300 million a year, or half of what the deficit-plagued municipal government contributes to the program. Subsequent stories in the press detailed the misdeeds of what the New York *Daily News* dubbed "Medidocs."

Nearly everyone will agree that the Medicaid program as now administered costs too much. But, contrary to what was implied in the Moss hearings, the great bulk of Medicaid payments in New York City does not go to doctors at all, whether they are in private practice or attached to Medicaid mills. It is the hospitals of New York City who collect most of the Medicaid funds. The breakdown in 1975 was as follows: $100 million went to private doctors for office visits, $160 million to the city's voluntary (private, nonprofit) hospitals for ambulatory care. The voluntary hospitals in particular have, in the decade since Medicaid was enacted, become some of the fattest leeches bleeding Medicaid, a program whose purpose was to make first-rate medical care accessible to the poor at reasonable rates.

If we choose to emphasize the voluntary hospitals in an article about Medicaid fraud, it is not that their sins have been more heinous than those of others. There is enough blame to go around. And only some of the misuse of Medicaid funds in the hospitals can be ascribed to the kind of blatant fraud observed by Senator Moss's investigators at some of the Medicaid mills. Unlike the mill profiteers, the hospital administrators are not lining their own pockets with illicit funds. Still, in the words of Dr. Tom Travers, at the time of this interview and up to this spring, director of ambulatory (outpatient) care for New York City Medicaid, "the people who have been pointing the finger at Medicaid mills have pointed to the wrong place. You don't find such abuses at the hospitals, but if you add up the money lost, the dollar amount is incredible." The hospitals take such a big bite out of the Medicaid budget that even small abuses show up as a large sum of public moneys misspent and contribute significantly to the excessive cost of the Medicaid program. It may be easier to talk about small-time chiselers, "ripping off the system," or welfare mothers with uncountable broods of children abusing their easy access to free medical care. But it is time to think of a real Medicaid giveaway—in the hospital clinics.

Such institutions as Columbia-Presbyterian and Mount Sinai hospitals in New York, which once served a comfortably off and almost exclusively white clientele, have come to be a major source of primary care for the poor black and Hispanic populations of the city. The thrust of the Medicaid program, enacted as an amendment to the Social Security Act in 1965, was to bring the poor into the mainstream of American medicine—which meant, first of all, into the doctor's office. They were never given this chance. No one knows how many private physicians in New York City might

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have been willing to add Medicaid patients to their practice, given an adequate financial return. But Medicaid rates for an office visit, which were low at the inception of the program, were reduced by 20 percent in 1969. They now range from $6 to $15, depending on the specialty, while a Park Avenue practitioner may normally charge from $40 to $75. The Medicaid payments, moreover, must be collected directly from the government; many physicians would prefer to bill the patient, as they can under the Medicare program for the elderly. One physician affiliated with Mount Sinai accepts Medicaid patients but never bothers to collect payment from the program. Instead, he lets his staff keep the fees, if they handle the paperwork on their own time.

With many physicians refusing to treat Medicaid patients, and with family practice on the decline in the city, hospital OPD's (Outpatient Departments) have become major providers of primary care in New York. Much of this burden once was borne by the 16 municipal hospitals. But the quality of care in the public hospitals is commonly believed to be lower than in the voluntaries, and Medicaid patients were supposed to have the freedom to choose their own "health-care providers." Publicity campaigns (sponsored both by the City and private organizations) informed them of their privileges. In large numbers they "voted with their feet," deserting the municipals for the voluntaries, which had never before seen such an influx of welfare clients. At Mount Sinai Hospital, according to its director, Dr. S. David Pomrinse, about half the OPD patients now come from Spanish Harlem, and another quarter from the South Bronx. Most have Medicaid. Collectively, the voluntaries now provide about half of outpatient Medicaid care in New York City. At the same time that patient traffic has increased in the OPDs, the emergency rooms have seen a sharp increase in patient visits, mostly nonemergency cases involving Medicaid recipients. The emergency room in fact has become a kind of second OPD for many poor patients, and in some cases their first source of routine medical care.

The government aid programs have transformed some of the voluntary hospitals into what Dr. Travers calls "Medicaid junkies," shifting their financial base to the point where the "voluntaries" are in effect publicly supported institutions. At Beth Israel, only 15 to 20 percent of the visits are paid for by the "Blues" (Blue Cross/Blue Shield). Almost all the rest of the fees come from Medicare and Medicaid, 70.8 percent from Medicaid alone. This is an extreme case, but other hospitals also draw a large share of their revenues from the programs. Medicaid in particular heavily subsidizes the OPDs. A special study of 18 voluntaries carried out by the United Hospital Fund in 1972 showed that Medicaid visits accounted for 44 percent of visits to the OPDs. In 1975, Medicaid visits represented 47 percent of clinic visits both at St. Luke's and Columbia-Presbyterian, and 45 percent at Mount Sinai. "So dependent are voluntaries on public funds," says Dr. Lowell E. Bellin, at the time of this interview and up to last January New York City's commissioner of health, "that if I were to wake up one morning in a bad mood and decided to cut off city Medicaid funds, most of them would have to declare bankruptcy within 48 hours."

The cash nexus involving hospitals and government money grows more important each year. In the U.S. as a whole, hospital care now accounts for 56 percent of all public spending for health care; and 55 percent of all hospital expenditures come from public funds. Paradoxically, Medicaid is both a victim of rising hospital costs and a contributing cause. Within a year after Medicaid was implemented, average OPD charges quadrupled, from $5 to $20. The charge is now as much as $63 per visit (more in specialized hospitals), above what many physicians would charge for an office visit on Park Avenue. "Medicaid contributes significantly to this inflation," says Dr. Martin Paris, executive director of New York City Medicaid. "Here is free money. How can you expect to keep costs down?"

But patients, unfortunately, do not all have access to "free money," and as costs rise the

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middle-class consumer has been particularly hard hit. The definition of eligibility for Medicaid has been tightened. While at the outset a family of four with an income of $6,000 would have received benefits, the cutoff is now set at $5,000; and in terms of buying power, $5,000 is a substantially lower income than it was ten years ago. In fact, virtually all recipients of Medicaid in New York City are also welfare recipients—a group that, under the Medicaid law, *must* receive benefits from any state program.

The middle-class patient is caught in a bind: too affluent for Medicaid and too poor to be able to afford an OPD at a voluntary hospital or to afford a private physician. Commissioner Bellin deplores the "notch effect" of giving unlimited benefits to welfare recipients and virtually no benefits to working people. "Instead of having a program with a spectrum, you have everything, everything, everything, then the notch, and nothing, nothing, nothing." Working people pay taxes to help support the Medicaid program, and many of them would agree with the negative assessment given by Dr. Paris. "There's something totally wrong with a system that taxes someone to subsidize another person to a better standard of care than is available to the person who is paying for it in the first place." These sentiments are echoed by Dr. Bellin. "Fewer and fewer people are being served, and the public is getting angrier and angrier. This time bomb has to go off."

Welfare Chiselers in White Coats: How Hospitals Pad the Cost of Medicaid

DO HOSPITAL OPDS have to cost so much that middle-class people cannot afford them? If you ask most hospital administrators, they will tell you that the outpatient services are a deficit-ridden operation, and that even with Medicaid the inpatient operations must in effect subsidize the OPD. New York City officials say that some hospitals have found such a bonanza in Medicaid that outpatient services have turned into profitable operations. Beth Israel, for example, runs 28 methadone clinics for drug addicts, every clinic an efficient intake valve for Medicaid funds. "Why do hospitals go into the methadone business?" Dr. Paris asks. "Because there is reimbursement, and they have done very well by it."

Even if they have not opened storefront operations, the hospitals have aped the mills in other ways, the officials charge. A preliminary audit by the New York City Health Department of outpatient and emergency room billings during one month of 1975 revealed a large number of irregularities that had resulted in overcharges to Medicaid. According to law, Medicaid is supposed to be billed for an all-inclusive patient visit. Once a patient comes in, the visit begins and the charge remains the same whatever services are required—X-rays, laboratory tests, or consultations at other clinics in the hospital. The hospitals have interpreted the concept of "visit" very loosely indeed. Sometimes treatment is spread out over ten days of X-rays, tests, and pharmacy visits, and Medicaid is charged for each day. Or a patient is referred from one clinic to another—from ophthalmology to neurology, for example—and there are suddenly two "visits," although the consultations may take place on the same day. "This is known as ping-ponging when the Medicaid mills do it," comments Dr. Bellin. "But when the hospitals do it it's known as comprehensive care."

Other questionable practices include billing Medicaid for visits on Sunday when the clinic is closed; charging outpatient visits as emergency-room visits or vice versa, depending on which fee is higher; and using an incorrect clinic code (such as a medical code for a dental service) to circumvent a rule requiring prior approval for some procedures. Medicaid has been billed for a medical visit when the patient simply came in to refill a prescription. And the program has been charged when patients come in to make an appointment, even if they receive no treatment; when they cancel an appointment; or when, tired of sitting in the waiting room, they simply walk out without having seen a doctor.

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The term "visit" has been stretched beyond what the letter of the law allows. Other cases are more difficult to interpret. An illustration, cited by Dr. John T. Gentry, former executive director of New York City Medicaid, is group psychotherapy. For example, the Payne-Whitney Clinic, psychiatric division of New York Hospital, has been billing Medicaid $94 per patient for each session of groups as large as eight. This is the same rate charged for individual therapy. Is a group session eight visits while an individual session is one visit? In theory, yes. But the example shows that the principle of the all-inclusive charge, when faithfully applied, can yield baroque results.

Some of the differences between the hospitals and the city involve conflicting interpretations of Medicaid regulations. In the case of double billing and errors in the dates of invoices the hospitals blame computer error; "programmer error" would perhaps be a better term. But Dr. Travers observes that some hospitals have been deliberately cooking the books:

> If someone in a Medicaid mill had done this, the place would be closed down and he'd go to jail. There's really not much difference between the Medicaid mills and some of our most prestigious hospitals. One's overt and the other's covert. One moment you're talking to some physician from an obviously crooked Medicaid mill, who's screaming that he's going to get his attorney after you. And the next moment you're talking to an administrator of a leading hospital who's being very civilized, but stealing in an even bigger and better way. It's simply a question of style.

The hospitals, of course, are highly respectable institutions; they perform essential services; and closing them down would throw large numbers of people out of work. The best the City can hope for is restitution of moneys paid out for unjustified claims. The sums involved are large. One major New York hospital received $6 million from Medicaid for its OPD last year, and the City Health Department is questioning $4 million of it. The City expects $18 million (12.8 percent of total payments) to be returned from the voluntary hospitals, as compared to $2 million from the Medicaid mills, which the City has already obtained. Some hospitals have started repayments, but in a trickle. Mount Sinai recently refunded $67,000 for the dental clinic alone.

In a city as short of cash as New York, $18 million in a year is an unacceptable drain. But the crux of the Medicaid problem in the hospitals is not a matter of fraudulent claims or even computer errors. Medicaid is heavily involved in the OPDs, which receive virtually no third-party payments from other sources. The inpatient side, in contrast, is well covered by Blue Cross and other hospitalization insurance. Should a clinic visit necessarily cost over $60? Should the voluntary hospitals of New York have received $140 million in Medicaid funds for outpatient services in 1975, even supposing that their claims were within the letter of the law?

Many medical economists would argue that the OPD need not take up as burdensome a share of hospital expenses as it now does. Hospital administrators calculate costs on a "step-down" basis, which means that they allocate some part of all general expenses, from heating oil to the salary of the personnel director, to the OPD and other departments. Often the people who run the OPD have no direct control over the budget, and nobody knows what the actual costs of the OPD are. Richard A. Berman has shown the drawbacks of the "step-down" system as it operates at New York Hospital-Cornell Medical Center, where he is associate hospital director for ambulatory care. OPD expenses there were $10 million in 1975, out of a total hospital budget of $110 million. Of the $10 million, less than $2 million, or 18 percent, appeared as directly budgeted expenses—the salaries of physicians, nurses, and assistants who actually worked in the OPD. The rest was taken up xy the department's share of ancillary services (such as X-ray machines) and indirect costs (such as the heating bills).

It may be to a hospital's advantage to shift costs from an area generating little revenue to a better source of income, and hospital

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reimbursement has become an administrative fine art. Berman points out, for example, that if a hospital found that its inpatient cost had exceeded the Medicare reimbursement limit for an inpatient, it could simply switch some of this cost to the OPD (and Medicaid). Berman charges that "under such a system of accounting and control, ambulatory care becomes the financial scapegoat."

Many of the hospitals' defenders would argue that it is worth paying a premium to subsidize the major teaching institutions, since they get the brightest young medical graduates who provide a high level of medical care to poor patients in the OPDs. The question is whether Medicaid itself ought to be saddled with the indirect costs of their education. Escalating hospital costs in part can be traced to the major pay increases won by hospital workers (cooks, porters and other nonmedical personnel) and even by interns in recent years. The major drain on hospital resources, however, is not a matter of salaries but of the cost of acquiring prestigious and expensive new equipment, whether medically necessary or not. According to Dr. Rashi Fein, professor of economics of medicine at Harvard Medical School, "the percentage of hospital costs attributable to payroll has been declining all these years, and if there is a major culprit it is probably the growth of technology." Dr. Travers cites, as an example of the hospitals' greed for glamorous new equipment, the fact that 16 hospitals in New York City have acquired "CAT scanners," X-ray devices that give a "3-D" view of internal organs. While they are a useful diagnostic tool in some cases, a smaller number could have been purchased and shared by these hospitals. "At the same time," says Dr. Travers, "these hospitals have balked at implementing a wide screening program for glaucoma that would have cost about a dollar a patient. Why? Because it wasn't as prestigious as a CAT."

The search for new funds now makes up a major part of the business of running a hospital.

> It's a fascinating but also a tremendously depressing experience [says a member of the board of a major hospital]. All the discussions are about "marketing"—that's the term they use. The problem is that we aren't getting as many patients as we ought to, and we're losing money. And this August we didn't have as many patients as last year. When you consider that more patients means more *sickness,* you realize that it's a completely insane world. The whole atmosphere is one of selling a product. And in that atmosphere utilization and cost accounting go out the window. You just go after bucks.

Dr. Paris compares the hospitals to heliotropic plants growing toward the sun. "Any hospital will grow where the money is. They have to." Nonprofit institutions reimbursed for costs on a step-down basis have little incentive to economize. Instead, obeying a corollary of Parkinson's law, they add new projects to take up the money availble for their expansion. Dr. Paris sees no end in sight to spiralling costs unless the hospitals institute major reforms. "When we begin to finance medical care for the most politically conscious and articulate segment of the population, it's going to go through the ceiling."

Reform of hospital finance is a long-term project. One way to start reducing the costs of primary care, say New York City officials, is to take it out of the hospitals. They argue that most of the services performed in hospital OPDs could be provided just as effectively and more cheaply in storefront operations—honest, well-run versions of the Medicaid mills. Dr. Travers even suggests that some of these facilities are already providing better primary care than many New York City hospitals. Even if the hospitals retained responsibility for these operations, he would like to locate them in satellite clinics outside the hospital walls. Around some hospitals something like this arrangement may exist *de facto.* To quote Dr. Paris:

> You know who's moonlighting in Medicaid centers? You go up to the centers around Mount Sinai and you'll find half the staff of Mount Sinai working up there. What we need is more of the same, and less expensive technology. A CAT scanner costs half a million. Do you know what you could do with that kind of money at a renovated storefront? You could hire ten of the

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top young physicians coming out of the training programs each year and pay them $50,000 each to practice first-rate medicine.

It is likely, though, in the immediate future, that hospitals will continue to provide a large part of the primary care received by Medicaid patients, and so Medicaid reform must include a closer scrutiny of the operations of OPDs and hospital billing practices. The first such move was the initial audit of the hospitals' OPD books last summer under the direction of Commissioner Bellin, a seasoned veteran in the frustrating guerrilla war against Medicaid chicanery. In 1972, for example, when Dr. Bellin was first deputy commissioner, he directed an investigation of the ambulance services that were transporting patients to hospital clinics for rehabilitative therapy. Many of the names on the ambulance records appeared nowhere on the clinic lists. After a little more research, some of the missing names did turn up—on death certificates filed with the Department of Health. As Bellin noted, "they were presumably bringing the corpses back and forth for physiotherapy for a couple of months."

To the public, the current investigations may seem to be too little and too late. Still, says Dr. Travers,

> it is the first serious audit of the OPDs ever made. In the private sector, which is widely praised for its "efficiency," a comparable investigation has yet to be carried out. No one knows how much Blue Cross, Blue Shield, and private insurance rates have been inflated by questionable accounting practices and outright fraud. There is no reason to assume that the private sector has a less spotted record in this area than the government programs.

Although the initial results have been limited, the government investigation now under way in New York has the potential of yielding high returns for a small investment. The New York City Health Department estimates that the Medicaid program could get back $26 for every dollar spent on auditing.

Unfortunately, the agencies that are supposed to police the hospitals are hobbled by limited resources and confusion over jurisdictions. Medicaid rates for New York State (including the City) are set in Albany, and the state government has the task of overseeing inpatient operations. The New York City Health Department, however, oversees private practitioners and OPD operations in the city, while the actual disbursal of funds is the responsibility of the Department of Social Services.

The City Health Department is too short of staff and money to wage an effective campaign against fraud. In a budget of over $2 billion, the allocation for monitoring is under $3 million, or less than 15/100 of one percent of the total. The Health Department now has two lawyers, a dozen investigators, and about 20 clerical helpers. They are limited to about 400 to 600 challenges to Medicaid billings in a year. Dr. Paris would like to hold 2,500 such hearings a year. The use of a computer allows the city to construct "patient profiles" showing double billings and other irregularities that might be hidden in the jumble of day-to-day records. But the Commissioner complains that political considerations make it difficult for investigators to obtain adequate time on the computer for screening Medicaid expenditures. "The top priority of the Department of Social Services, the prime time on that computer, is sending out welfare checks; because if the checks don't go out there's a revolution, and blood will flow like borscht in the streets."

Cleaning the Augean stables calls for more than exposing fraud, though. An even more essential and equally Herculean task is to bring hospital charges in line with real costs, and keep costs down. Here again the private sector has performed no better than the government, although in fairness it must be said that the administrators' hands were tied. When Blue Cross programs in Ohio and southern New York tried to curtail hospital expenses, the courts ruled that they lacked the necessary authority. New York State has taken the initial step of holding Medicaid reimbursements this year to 1975 levels. But it could be argued that this solution suffers from the same defects as step-down accounting: by

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cutting costs across the board, it fails to identify the real costs of the various programs.

Some further financial relief might come if the Medicaid fee schedule for visits to a physician's office were raised to a level more in keeping with prevailing rates, although still below the charges for a hospital OPD. If more private practitioners agreed to treat Medicaid patients, it might be possible to lure some of them away from the expensive hospital clinics. In this tradeoff, however, the potential for abuse by physicians would increase. One countermeasure often suggested is more vigorous action by county and state medical associations against wayward practitioners. Public health officials such as Commissioner Bellin, however, remain skeptical about the profession's ability to police itself. "Somewhere along the line the government has got to intervene."

Medicaid Costs in Perspective: Can We Afford National Health Insurance?

"EVERY TWO YEARS," Dr. Bellin complains, "sex, sin, and Medicaid are rediscovered and make front-page headlines. And then everyone forgets about it." Better regulation of Medicaid is essential. But recent scandals, which briefly brought Medicaid abuses back to the front pages, have perhaps diverted attention from the larger issue of the country's need for health care. "Shady financial practices are reprehensible enough," Dr. Travers says, "but why is public attention being focused on fraud? The greater crime is that people are going without medical care."

One of the unfortunate effects of Medicaid's seeming debacle has been to discourage Congress and the American public from further expansion of medical assistance. Not that the nation opposes the principle of wider coverage. A recent poll conducted by *Time* found that 61 percent of the American public would be willing to pay higher taxes to support national health insurance. But if Medicaid costs have escalated far beyond what the program's creators envisaged, how can we hope to hold costs in line for a more ambitious insurance system? Even proponents of national health insurance such as Commissioner Bellin can understand the public's reservations, in view of Medicaid's disappointing record. The problem, he believes, was a kind of *hubris;* the program simply aimed too high. "If they had promised less, and if the programs had been far more modest ten years ago, then we would already have national health insurance."

What can we learn from the history of Medicaid? Perhaps the most important point is that the program was not systematically designed. Title XIX of the Social Security Act (Medicaid) was conceived as an afterthought to title XVIII, which established the program popularly known as Medicare, an insurance system for the elderly, administered as part of the national Social Security system. Medicaid, which went into effect on January 1, 1966, was part of a federal/state assistance program designed to benefit primarily those persons already receiving other federal welfare assistance. The states could add other benefits and extend them to the "medically indigent" who are not on welfare. The federal government provided matching funds at a rate depending on the means of the state, ranging from 83 percent in Mississippi down to 50 percent in three states with higher per capita incomes (California, Massachusetts, and New York). These three states had a tradition of generous public assistance and opted for ambitious programs; New York provided the most generous benefits in the nation. Other states provided only the minimum required of them in order to obtain federal funds at all. Federal assistance was (and is) open-ended; Washington has to match any expenditures made by a state under an approved program.

Costs have expanded continuously since the inception of the program, and the trend since 1969 has been for states to cut Medicaid benefits. One of the problems in designing a program of this kind is that costs are notoriously difficult to predict. An actuary can calculate that, on the average, there will be so many fires each year, or even so much catastrophic illness. But it may be that office visits, unlike catastrophic illness, are simply

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not an insurable "risk." The patient can walk in at will and ask for service. The more predictable prepaid system, such as New York's Health Insurance Plan, is even less palatable to most American physicians than collecting fees from the government. (Under the prepaid system the patient pays a lump sum for a year of medical care, which is provided by salaried physicians.)

Some encouragement comes, however, from recent studies suggesting that Medicaid recipients have not abused the program on a wide scale, as some critics have charged. They do consult the physician slightly more often than fee-paying patients, but this pattern may simply reflect the fact that the poor are sicker and need more medical attention than the average patients. The only area in which demand has grown substantially in the last ten years has been institutional care for the elderly. Some abuses by patients do occur; it is well known to Medicaid administrators in New York, for example, that there is a black market for Medicaid cards. But most of the truly *excessive* costs of the Medicaid program are caused by mismanagement, fraud, and questionable accounting practices.

In fact, for all its much publicized defects, Medicaid has not been much more inefficient than the private sector in providing health care; costs are inflated in *every* area of medicine. Health care has become a gigantic industry in the United States. Total expenditures in 1975 amounted to $118.5 billion, or 8.3 percent of the GNP. These costs work out to $547 for each American. Medicaid payments in the same year totalled $13 billion—about 1 percent of the GNP, or $54 for each American. Washington's share came to $6.9 billion; about 2.5 cents of every federal tax dollar you pay goes for Medicaid. New York City spends about 14 percent of its budget on Medicaid—the highest proportion in the nation, but still less than many of its citizens realize.

There were about 24 million Medicaid recipients in 1975; Medicaid paid out an average of $560 for each. If we disregard patients in the medically indigent category, who often run up staggering medical bills because of catastrophic illness, we arrive at the figure of $410 ($578 in New York City). This collection of figures may be confusing, but it points to an important conclusion. *Average Medicaid expenditures were not much greater than the average expenditure for medical care in the population as a whole.* It is important to remember that Medicaid serves a population whose medical needs are greater than those of the average American. It supports the chronically ill, nursing home patients, and victims of devastating illness who have exhausted private insurance benefits or would not be eligible for them in the first place. Medicaid also pays for costly treatment programs for drug addicts. Nor is this all. Unlike private insurance, Medicaid does not require a welfare patient to pay a cash "deductible" before its payments start.

When all these factors are taken into account, the Medicaid program begins to look good—particularly when compared with the cost of other insurance programs that provide lesser benefits. The comparison may be called unfair, if only because the vast government program achieves some "economies of scale" that a smaller system could never realize. But when critics of Medicaid grumble that Uncle Sam, in a new version of the Midas legend, turns everything he touches into other people's gold, a look at the real alternatives is in order.

One alternative clearly is no medical care at all, and a large number of needy Americans have found this "program" the only one within their means. But consider some of the programs that give medical benefits in return for cash premiums. An employer or union participating in New York Blue Cross/Blue Shield at the average group rate would pay $736 a year for a family package covering hospitalization in a semiprivate room for 21 days of each stay, then 50 percent of cost for 180 days. The maximum for any one surgical procedure would be $1,500, with 20 percent of the surgeon's fee added on for anesthesia. Major medical (with a deductible of $100) would provide 80 percent of charges up to $25,000. Like the fine print of any policy, these figures make for dull reading. What they

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show is that this is one of the better insurance programs. But there is a deductible, and the benefits are not open-ended. Many people would not even be eligible for the program because they had a preexisting disease or because they did not happen to work for the right company. An individual policy, if they could get one, would be far more expensive and would provide fewer benefits.

Most employees, however, will find that the actual amounts deducted from their paychecks for medical insurance are less than the figures cited, because of substantial co-payments by employers. But these fringe benefits are in no sense "free." When they do not come directly out of the employee's salary, they are passed along to the public in taxes or other costs. It has been estimated that $175 of the cost of every new General Motors car goes for employee medical insurance. The programs provide expensive benefits, and someone has to pay. In the end the costs are higher than for Medicaid. One reason is that while administrative costs are less than 2 percent for the Medicaid program, they reach about 8 percent for Blue Cross/Blue Shield and run 10-15 percent for private insurance.

Medicaid, in short, has worked reasonably well in financial terms for a group of Americans that is large but not large enough. Not that Medicaid should be expanded in its present form, if only because it is now so closely associated with welfare that a Medicaid card has become a kind of stigma. An extended insurance program, run more along the lines of Medi*care,* could be administered by health departments rather than by the agencies euphemistically known as "departments of social services." Only in this way can we end a two-class system of medical care in the United States.

Few proponents of National Health Insurance, it is true, would argue that we have the resources to make all new medical technology and all elective procedures available on demand to the general population. But it would be deceptive to focus on the most costly items in the armamentarium of modern medicine; cost controls have never yet been seriously put into effect, and in any case the vast majority of Americans do not require the most expensive procedures. Of course, we must still pay for research, the development of new technology, and the training of new generations of scientists and practitioners; but the costs must be allocated more equitably. With funds for primary care properly distributed and accounted for, there is no reason why any American who needs basic medical care should be shut out because he cannot pay the fee. Seen in this perspective, the record of the last ten years is indeed one of failure. For too many people, in Commissioner Bellin's words, "the program that was supposed to put them in the mainstream of American medicine has left them up the creek." That is the real shame of Medicaid. □

Postscript

AS OF April 1, 1977, New York State put a $50 limit on all outpatient visits. However, as Dr. Travers observed in a recent interview, hospitals easily circumvent this ceiling by simply extending patient treatment over several visits, and charging accordingly.

In May 1977, the administration of New York City Medicaid was taken over by the New York State Department of Health. Dr. Travers now is the director of Health Services Evaluation within that system; Dr. Paris retained his position as the Executive Medicaid director until September, when the state takeover was to be completed. Dr. Bellin, for unrelated reasons, has returned to a professorship at Columbia University's School of Public Health. Their comments, however, have not lost their applicability.

Needless to say, the conditions I have described exist not only in New York but in many other parts of the country. □

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Leo P. Ribuffo

Panthers and Bulldogs — Revisited

Compared to Harvard or Chicago, not to mention Berkeley, Columbia, or Wisconsin, Yale was a remarkably placid campus during the late 1960s. Most students opposed the Vietnam War and felt an amorphous commitment to racial equality but few stood to the left of Eugene McCarthy or Robert Kennedy. Radicalism consisted of small bands of socialists, feminists, and Ivy League hippies. Even these dissidents were likely to concur in the prevailing opinion, noted by John Hersey, that they attended "quite simply the best private university in the country." The nitty gritty of New Haven, including its ethnic politics and black ghetto, were physically near but psychologically distant. During the spring of 1970, however, the indictment of 14 Black Panthers intruded on Yale's placidity.

In May 1969, police had arrested eight New Haven Panthers for allegedly kidnapping, torturing, and murdering Alex Rackley, a suspected turncoat. Six additional party members, including Chairman Bobby Seale, were apprehended during the summer. Seale, George Sams, Warren Kimbro, and Lonnie McLucas were indicted for first-degree murder. Two youths were turned over to juvenile authorities; the others were charged as accessories. Maintaining that Seale had ordered him to kill Rackley, Sams pleaded guilty to second-degree murder in December. Kimbro followed suit a month later. The court refused bail to all but one of the defendants who was jailed for refusing to testify under a grant of immunity. Throughout the winter, pretrial defense motions vainly argued that the arrests, seizure of evidence, and indictments were irregular. On firmer ground, attorneys claimed that the prisoners were denied adequate opportunity to confer with counsel and each other.

Although Superior Court convened less than a block from Yale, most students and faculty ignored the case until the spring of 1970. On April 14, following a scuffle in court, Judge Harold Mulvey sentenced two visiting Panthers, Emory Douglas and David Hilliard, to six months in jail. For numerous undergraduates, John Taft says, in his book,* these contempt citations confirmed "vaguely held opinions" that the Panthers were victims of persecution. The next day, an ad hoc meeting discussed various means, both sensible and silly, to influence the trial. Passing over suggestions to seize the courthouse or commit suicide in protest, the gathering urged Yale to create a defense fund and called for a moratorium on classes. On April 19, speaking as an "anguished citizen," Chaplain William Sloane Coffin told his congregation that the trial "might be legally right but morally wrong." Later in the day, Doug Miranda, the local Panther captain, demanded a student strike. He wooed the audience of 1,500 with a shrewd allusion to the college mascot: "There's no reason why the Panther and the Bulldog can't get together."

Despite growing sympathy for Seale and his fellow defendants, Panthers and Bulldogs

*John Taft, *Mayday at Yale: A Case Study in Student Radicalism* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1977).

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sometimes still growled at each other. On April 21, David Hilliard, whose jail sentence had been reduced to time served, told a mass meeting at Ingalls hockey rink that there was nothing wrong with the murder of "pigs." He answered a chorus of boos by denouncing racist Yale "motherfuckers." A quick retreat to affability failed to satisfy the crowd. Nor was the affability permanent. When Panther guards beat a student who approached the microphone, Hilliard recommended similar "humane" treatment for all foes of black liberation. The meeting ended with a call for a "shutdown" by Kenneth Mills, a black philosopher who was de facto liaison between Yale and the Panthers.

Within hours, a majority of undergraduates in 9 of the 12 residential colleges endorsed the strike. The Strike Steering Committee, composed of delegates from undergraduate, graduate, and professional school "collectives," quickly formulated five demands. The Yale Corporation must demand "immediate dismissal" of the "political" trial, cease depleting the local housing market, provide day-care facilities for employees, establish "adequate" wage and retirement programs, and abandon the proposed Social Science Center, a school for managers who would manipulate the poor instead of helping them. In addition, the Steering Committee asked Yale to accommodate pro-Panther demonstrators who would rally in New Haven on May 1-2.

Between April 22 and Mayday, almost three-quarters of the student body boycotted classes. Few endorsed all of the Steering Committee proposals. The planks dealing with wages, day care, housing, and the Social Science Center appealed to specialized constituencies. The Panther trial, on the other hand, provoked widespread discussion. Considering dismissal of the indictments neither likely nor desirable, most students favored efforts to secure a fair hearing. Self-interest prompted enthusiasm for the opening of Yale on Mayday weekend. By offering hospitality, undergraduates hoped to dissuade visiting radicals from violence.

So did the administration, which operated with characteristic flexibility. On April 19, declaring Yale's neutrality in the Panther case, President Kingman Brewster had affirmed his faith in the Connecticut judiciary. Four days later he doubted that black revolutionaries could be tried fairly "anywhere in the United States." Thereafter, he permitted Yale's residential colleges to feed and house demonstrators and coordinated plans for Mayday with the police. Following Brewster's lead, on April 23 the college faculty voted to modify "normal [academic] expectations."

Simultaneously, students gathered to discuss the trial, the purpose of higher education, and Yale's responsibility to New Haven. They listened to lectures, often by distinguished scholars, on race relations, law, and educational reform. They cut their hair and conducted a "teach-out" in the city's ethnic neighborhoods. Amid escalating apprehension, they prepared for an estimated 100,000 demonstrators on Mayday. Showing what Professor Peter Brooks called their "managerial instinct," they organized to fight fires, treat injuries, and control crowds. A student-faculty monitoring committee rebutted wild stories. Still, rumors abounded during the week after normal expectations had been modified: that someone had installed machine guns in the Calhoun college tower, that a howitzer protected the rare-book library, that campus conservatives were arming. By May 1, almost one-third of the undergraduates had left town.

They were not alone in anticipating violence. Governor John Dempsey announced that he was sending 4,000 national guardsmen to New Haven on May 1. Assistant Attorney General William Ruckleshaus said that troops would stand ready in neighboring states. From a different vantage point, the Panthers feared a police raid on their headquarters. Late on April 30, after President Nixon had announced the invasion of Cambodia, Brewster anxiously conferred with an incongruous group that included Coffin, David Dellinger and Cyrus

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Vance—all alumni. It would be difficult, Taft says, to exaggerate the prevailing "mood of fear."

The two-day demonstration was anticlimactic. Fewer than 30,000 persons gathered on the New Haven green. Local Panthers spoke about the trial. National radical celebrities related repression at home to American aggression in Indochina. Abby Hoffman, the Falstaff of the revolution, tried unsuccessfully to convince the crowd that Kingman Brewster was an enemy. On Saturday, Tom Hayden announced a national student strike to protest the Cambodian invasion. Looking back a month later, Peter Brooks concluded that the talks had been "utterly boring."

The speakers may have muted their rhetoric in order to discourage violence. Strike leaders, including Panthers and other blacks, who expected retaliation to fall hardest on the ghetto, worked to preserve order. Police Chief James Ahern and his force showed admirable restraint. Unfortunately, the preference for peace was not universally shared. On Friday and Saturday nights, some demonstrators confronted police and guardsmen on the green where the two sides exchanged epithets, rocks, and tear-gas cannisters. Fires of undetermined origin damaged the law school and destroyed the headquarters of New Haven's left-liberal Democrats. Despite these incidents, there were few injuries, only a handful of arrests, and slight property damage. Surveying the weekend in his Sunday sermon, Coffin concluded, "We took a Christian chance and it paid off. We licked 'em with love."

For John Taft, who regrets that the chance was taken, Coffin personifies "indiscriminate enthusiasm for the passing fashions of the young." Taft is glad that fashions pass quickly. While the Cambodian invasion and fatal shootings at Kent State stirred other colleges in May 1970, Yale reimposed more-or-less "normal expectations." Soon, Taft observes, an economic recession "altered priorities for everyone" and students are now "working much harder than in 1970."

The book in which Taft renders these verdicts is subtitled a "case study." Copious citations, a list of 52 interviews, and the author's announcement that his research began in a Yale seminar contribute to the aura of scholarship. Beneath the aura, however, Taft is insensitive to problems that perplex good historians. The "case study" offers generalizations about student radicalism without comparing Yale to other cases. In a sense, *Mayday* is an inverted version of the hymns to Alma Mater that often pass for educational history. Even this narrow view is flawed, because Taft deposits us at Phelps Gate in mid-1970 without an orientation. We lack essential background about earlier town-gown tensions, internal university politics, and campus activism.

Sophisticated practitioners of oral history recognize that reminiscences are affected by current moods. Like Studs Terkel or Marcel Ophuls, Taft might have turned this perennial problem to advantage by using interviews to illuminate past *and* present. Rather, he tends to accept recollections at face value, especially if they contain "sober" second thoughts. Moreover, he uses political labels to designate heroes and villains. We are not told, for example, that many academic "conservatives" were liberal Democrats on the national spectrum. In *Mayday*, "radical" is roughly synonymous with disorderly and conservatives are those who defend "academic integrity" against radicals.

Although Taft never discusses his own activities during 1970, his tone and selection of evidence suggest that he identified with the "conservatives." He prefers accounts of meetings that stress an "apocalyptic" mood. He understates the distaste for violence that several commentators discerned among students. Judgments of this kind, however questionable, are the legitimate province of a historian. But Taft's one-dimensional portrait of sinister radicals and befuddled liberals is indefensible.

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Anything that the activists did is suspect. Taft criticizes the "devious tactic" of allowing women canvassers to charm New Haven residents, a tactic about as devious as an ad for Dewar's Scotch in *Business Week*. He observes that an assistant chaplain "eloped to Australia with his girlfriend" from the Panther Defense Committee. The latter remark says more about Taft than about either radicalism or romance. Impervious to wit—ironically, a failing commonly ascribed to the left—he cannot appreciate the gallows humor that accompanied and relieved anxiety.

No aspect of Mayday produced more controversy than the role of Kingman Brewster. Tom Hayden compared him to Prince Sihanouk. William F. Buckley wrote that he sounded "like the last days of Alexander Kerensky." Spiro Agnew said that Yale needed more "mature" leadership. An activist quoted in *Mayday* recalls that the campus left had hoped to "co-opt Brewster," but Taft thinks that co-optation was unnecessary. Influenced by such "leftist friends" as William Kunstler, Brewster was ready to "leap leftward." Taft concedes that his shrewdness helped to control a volatile situation. Yet he cannot forgive Brewster for compromising Yale's "neutrality" by allying himself, even briefly, with foes of "academic integrity."

Once again analysis is muddled by Taft's fear of creeping radicalism. The local chapter of the New University Conference was closer to the mark when it pronounced Yale "Brewster's Secret Society." The place was dominated by an old-boy network. Academic conservatives like Taft felt betrayed when Brewster met the crisis by adding some new boys. Yet, though his constituency changed, his mode of operation did not. He still relied on informal consultations, showmanship, and mediation among rival factions. Brewster's "leftist" associations were less revealing than his claim to friendship with *both* Kunstler and McGeorge Bundy. Moreover, especially after Agnew's attack, faculty and students could love their president for the enemies he had made. Wiser than Hayden, Buckley, or Taft, Nora Sayre saw that Brewster had offered a "lesson in the old uses of liberalism." Always in charge of the co-optation, he resembled neither Sihanouk nor Kerensky, but Theodore Roosevelt and FDR.

Overall, Taft's interpretation is less persuasive than earlier analyses by Sayre, Peter Brooks, John Hersey, and Francine du Plessix Gray, who made no effort to conceal their bias. Nevertheless, though *Mayday* fails as history and declines to be forthright polemic, it remains interesting as an ideological artifact. Both Taft's view of the late 1960s and his general approach to social issues represent what should be called the new, new conservatism (ordinary new conservatism having peaked about 1953).

First, Taft thinks that he can explain Mayday by saying that participants were "irrational." Borrowing from pluralist sociology, he notes similar "paranoid" behavior among medieval millenarians and modern mobs poised to attack an "American Embassy or a Jewish ghetto." His application of these conventions is surprising only in its crudeness. For a decade, scholars in diverse fields have questioned the assumption that ideology can be reduced to neurotic symptoms. Taft blithely ignores this rich literature relevant to any "case study" of radicalism.

Even so, there is no excuse for his mechanical view of human nature. In *Mayday*, only leftists and their sympathizers respond to glandular secretions and nocturnal fantasies. Academic conservatives are cerebral, disinterested, and wise. This version of the 1960s on campus has triumphed partly because professors are good at covering their tracks. Some spadework uncovers plenty of conservative misconceptions and absurdities. None is more enlightening than the Weimar analogy. Passing over American parallels that might have made some sense, professors warned that young radicals resembled Hitler's Brownshirts. If we join Taft in deriding the "naive excitement" of

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undergraduates, what can we make of scholars who had trouble distinguishing between a noisy meeting at Calhoun college and the Reichstag fire? The facile comparison of students and Stormtroopers supports John Hersey's contention that faculty feelings about undergraduates often ranged from "mild distaste to loathing." Moreover, the Weimar analogy allowed intellectuals to believe that they too were on the barricades—defending humane learning against barbarians. Academic conservatives also have unconscious needs.

Second, Taft charges that Yale abandoned "integrity" when it acquiesced in the student strike. Along with others who fear for the Western intellectual tradition whenever classes are suspended, he has a utopian view of what undergraduates do with their time, especially during the last two weeks of spring semester. Kenneth Keniston has called the activity before Mayday an "essentially constructive human and social process." Perhaps it was also an educational success. At least the thinking stimulated by lectures, seminars, and informal bull sessions compared favorably to the usual last-minute rush to finish papers. Taft himself would have profited from the discussions of "value free" social science.

According to an emerging orthodoxy, higher education lapsed from "neutrality" into radical chic "relevance" during the 1960s. Indeed, the critique associating universities with the business elite and the Pentagon has been dismissed as effluvium from that wayward decade. Pruned of excesses, however, the argument retains merit. Yale trustees currently include two Republican senators, the editor of *Foreign Affairs*, and the Secretary of State. "Neutral" is not the best adjective to describe their attitudes. On most campuses, the "altered priorities" hailed by Taft mean expansion of "practical" programs at the expense of liberal arts. Yale has established the Graduate School of Organization and Management—a distant kin to the controversial Social Science Center—whose "neutrality" is clear only to those who suppose that the business of America is business. Unfortunately, few professors who denounced student radicals are moved to defend the Western intellectual tradition against this latest form of "relevance."

Uncritical faith in the law is the third shibboleth of the '70s promoted in *Mayday*. Taft dismisses the nationwide harassment of Panthers, blandly says that rulings against the New Haven defendants were "not unlawful," and ascribes "absurd" exaggerations about the case to "indiscriminate hatred of the government." Panther supporters obviously exaggerated when they said that Seale was being railroaded to death row. Yet Taft's version of the criminal-justice system is no more illuminating. As spokesmen for the American Civil Liberties Union observed in 1970, the legally correct conspiracy indictments and pretrial treatment of the Panthers showed that something was wrong with Connecticut law. Furthermore, Justice Frankfurter has warned that judges, despite efforts to discipline themselves, "unconsciously are too apt to be moved by the deeper undercurrents of public feelings." Jurors are moved both by public attitudes and by judges. In criminal cases that impinge on controversial social issues, the problem of bias is particularly acute. Even now, who can speak confidently about the guilt or innocence of Sacco and Vanzetti or Julius and Ethel Rosenberg? It is clear, however, that extralegal factors affected the rulings of Judge Thayer in the first case and the sentence passed by Judge Kaufman in the second.

Judge Mulvey was subject to the currents of his time. Worried by contemporary courtroom disruptions, he gave unusually harsh contempt sentences to Hilliard and Douglas. Also recalling recent "political" prosecutions, particularly the trial of the Chicago Seven, Kurt Schmoke, a black campus leader, explained that the strike was intended to prevent another "kangaroo court." This position involved tactical risks. But is was hardly "irrational" to think that public attention would encourage fairness by the judge and restrain a zealous prosecutor. To

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amend Brewster's famous remark, an *obscure* black revolutionary probably could not receive a fair trial anywhere in the United States.

Ultimately, the verdicts satisfied neither activists who had exonerated all defendants nor conservatives who had believed that an independent judiciary was threatened by external pressure. Lonnie McLucas was convicted of conspiracy to commit murder, acquitted of three other charges, and sentenced to 12-15 years in prison. In May 1971, the prosecution of Seale and Huggins ended in a hung jury. Convinced that "massive publicity" precluded an impartial rehearing, Judge Mulvey dismissed the indictments. Evidence showed that Huggins had at least witnessed Rackley's agony. The murder case against Seale was weak, but the possibility remained that he had wanted Panthers to "discipline" Rackley without killing him. The trial of Bobby Seale widened a controversy instead of ending it.

But Yale hardly noticed. As Taft remarks, several activists had already retreated into drugs or religious cults. Others had returned to normal niches in the establishment; radicalism, as Irving Howe and Lewis Coser note, often functions "as a kind of prep school for the leaders of American capitalist society." Although students interviewed by Taft remembered the spring of 1970 with nostalgia, most wished that they had been closer to the "political center." Similarly, Kingman Brewster questioned the wisdom of having opened Yale to protesters.

Brewster's decision under pressure was wiser than his second thoughts. On May 4, 1970, Taft says, Yale undergraduates had sensed "their own closeness" to the four students slain at Kent State. Later they forgot that tactical flexibility may have avoided bloodshed on their campus. Taft's book would now be recording more violence—and possibly several fatalities—if student marshals had not calmed crowds or if Brewster had left 25,000 demonstrators to sleep on the green. Even academic conservatives should wonder whether what Taft calls university "neutrality" is worth four lives.

The sober 1970s distort our perspective in another way. The Yale strike focused attention on racial discrimination, poverty, collegiate indifference to the surrounding community, and the courtroom problems of those whom William Kunstler called the "pariahs of the land." These issues are no longer fashionable, but none of them has been resolved. Nor can we suppose, as Americans like to do between crises, that consensus and quiet are the natural order of things.

Taft's treatment leaves a sense of *déja vu*. In 1954, sharing the dominant view that "radical criticism had nothing more to say to us," Murray Kempton regarded the left of the 1930s with "ironic detachment." In 1967, when urban riots and an Asian war dramatized the failures of postwar policy, Kempton concluded that the "spirit of the thirties had as much reproach to lay upon the fifties as the fifties had upon the thirties." He reminds us that it is easy "to see through the conventional wisdom of a generation gone" but difficult indeed "to escape the half-conscious acceptance of the wisdom of this one. . . ." Today the guardians of wisdom are less likely to cry for justice as anguished citizens than to preach a gospel of efficiency. And yet—or therefore—the spirit of the '60s has as much reproach to lay upon the '70s as the other way around. □

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David Bromwich

"Panthers & Bulldogs": A Comment

"Commit yourself" (the 1960s) and "Enjoy yourself" (the 1970s) are cant phrases. They mean nothing, they lead to nothing, they imply neither specific thought nor specific action, and they are so far *pure*. Those who find that some joys are unselfish by their very nature, and believe that political commitment ought to occur as a natural and not a compelled expression of conscience, will be unhappy with either slogan. But there are people, well-meaning and ingenuous as a rule, who look to the slogans for guidance and try to live by them, decade by decade. Anything I say about the Yale strike of 1970 will be colored by my impatience with such people, and perhaps by one other fact: I was at that time active in the antiwar movement and, beside an ever-present awareness of the slaughter in Vietnam, questions of university reform seemed to me of absolutely no importance. I may have been wrong in this. But my feelings about the war certainly helped to put me out of sympathy with the strike. Of the "Panther and Bulldog" alliance, and the panic-vacation it brought about, Leo Ribuffo gives the most reliable account I have seen: in adding my own words to his I can hardly pretend to write as a historian. But I attended many *ad hoc* meetings during those weeks, read many leaflets, argued with many friends, saw, heard, and felt a great deal, and have remembered what I saw and heard and felt.

I got my first inkling of the strike from a friend, Peter Connolly, who had gone out of curiosity to the *ad hoc* meeting of April 15, which he described as "crazed." At the meeting a Yale Suicide Pact had been proposed: every day, for an as yet undetermined period, one student would take his plunge, presumably from the top of Yale's fake-Gothic Harkness Tower, to alert the conscience of the world to the plight of the Black Panther party. The idea was given serious consideration but rejected. At this time few Yale students knew who the Black Panthers were. But the leaflet-makers went to work, and by the time of the "mass meeting" at Ingalls Rink, most students could read the fine print: something new had entered their lives, and school was no longer the main order of business. About half of Yale's undergraduates—by my estimate, which is no better or worse than any other—attended the meeting at Ingalls Rink. Several moments come back to me vividly.

Huey Newton, soon thereafter to publish his dialogues with an eminent Harvard psychologist and direct the black revolution from a $1,000-a-month penthouse in San Francisco, was in jail. His lawyer was introduced, and told the audience: "I bring you *word* from Huey P. Newton!" Never in my life have I heard such a roar as greeted this announcement. In another address of the evening David Hilliard found himself cursing the students who had come to hear him. A man looking angry and distraught made his way to the speaker's platform, and wrested the microphone from Hilliard. What he said was unintelligible. But the voice sounded European, and the Panthers may have brought to his mind an image of some other party, fascist or communist. Hilliard's bodyguards gave him a swift pummelling, and then Kenneth Keniston came to the platform, introduced himself as a psychologist, pronounced the man "disturbed" and took him away. When, near the end of the evening, William Sloane Coffin pledged his solidarity with the strike, but urged nonviolent forms of protest, I heard a flood of hisses and jeers. So did everyone around me, and I note the fact for what it is worth, since it has not been recorded in any history of the strike. The meeting ended with an injunction from Kenneth Mills, a brilliant and practiced orator, who insinuated in his

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speeches a world of sinister goings-on that the audience could know nothing of, but claimed for his part to be merely a disinterested ally of the Panthers. "We have given you these proposals," Mills said. "The choice lies with you. We can avert the terrible things we all fear. You will now go back to your colleges and vote. On strike, shut it down!"

Voting took place in the late night and early morning hours. In my own college, just over 100 votes were cast. More than 300 students belonged to the college. And what I know of the other colleges reveals a similar pattern. The votes were counted by the organizers of the strike, who reported their findings to "headquarters," from which in the late morning issued a paper heralding the unanimous strike. I will not try to convey the mood of hysteria that crept into Yale at the end of April, following the suspension of classes: the split-second changes of heart in people of moderate views—whispered confessions of a desire to live beyond the next few weeks—the Panthers with their universal denunciation, "Fool!" leveled at any white who argued at a meeting—frat boys screaming "Pig!" at passing cops—the confidential rumors about stashes of guns, ammunition, food, dope, plans, all leading to an overwhelming question—what will happen on Mayday? Thanks to Daniel P. Moynihan's *Playboy* interview, in the course of which he calls Nixon, Haldeman, and Erlichman fine gentlemen whom it was a pleasure to work with, we now know that the hysteria was not confined to Yale. Nixon's government had gone stark raving mad, and in the last weeks of April, according to Moynihan, the war room of the Pentagon was covered with *street maps of New Haven.*

For the peaceful coming and going of Mayday 1970, we may be grateful to two unexpected developments. First, the small number of protesters that actually showed up: 20,000 by a generous estimate, and if there were indeed 20,000 surely not less than 5,000 hailed from that well-accredited school of protest, the FBI. And second, the determination of New Haven's police chief, James Ahern, to resist the violent inclinations of both Nixon's government and assorted radicals, and be called "patsy" or "pig" any number of times rather than see a single person killed. There was nevertheless an impressive amount of wish-fulfilling violent talk. And there was confusion all around. It was either Jerry Rubin or Abbie Hoffman or both who in all innocence led a cheer of "Fuck Kingston Brewer."

The dynamics of one kind of university strike, buried in such questions as how moderate students are "radicalized," how class doubt or guilt paralyzes logic, how stopping the life of a university comes to seem a sure way of ending misery in the world, is treated at length in Steven Kelman's *Push Comes to Shove.* Despite some annoying personal asides, his account had the ring of truth for me, when I read it in the summer of 1970, because in most of the essentials it answered to my experience at Yale. I would still recommend the book to anyone curious about these matters. But the Black Panthers were peculiar to Yale: the issues discussed throughout April were the approach of Mayday, the proper relation of the university to the community, and the liberation of Bobby Seale. Discussion of the second of these issues tended to be rhetorical or perfunctory, while the first, once Mayday had passed and the world had failed to come to an end, dropped out of the picture entirely. What, then, of Bobby Seale? He was the leader of a rigidly top-down national organization; a member of the New Haven branch of his organization, Alex Rackley, had been tortured and put to death; Seale had been in New Haven on the night of the murder, and on hand for an interrogation of Rackley. The circumstantial evidence is not unlike the evidence linking Nixon to Watergate. It led to a hung jury, and Seale followed Nixon into politics. But this case is not a pretty thing.

That Bobby Seale deserved a fair trial might seem common sense. It was, however, during two weeks of April 1970 an extreme

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right-wing notion, prohibited at radical meetings and timidly voiced by a few students in the privacy of their rooms. What the Panthers and Bulldogs demanded was the unconditional liberation of Bobby Seale. And this was the line urged by William Sloane Coffin in his sermon of April 19. It would, Coffin said, be "legally right but morally wrong" for Seale to be kept in jail. Within a day or two "morally wrong" had become the prevailing wind, and how it filled the sails of the students! Even those who had never read a newspaper account of the case could tell that Seale was innocent. It stood to reason. And we all had a lot to learn from the Black Panther party. I can remember arguing at a mid-April meeting that we ought to support a fair trial for Bobby Seale but not ask for his immediate release—assuming, as everyone then did, that this were possible (the Yale Corporation would pay for it). I said that if ever laws were abridged for a special occasion, the first group to suffer in the country as a whole would be the left. This was evidently a new thought to some: it may have shifted a few votes. But the fair-trial motion lost. And afterward a friend took me aside, his eyes filled with a look of disappointment I shall never forget, and said: "How could you do it?" A fair trial was only the last screen for hypocrisy, and to ask for it here was the same thing as killing Bobby Seale. In this opinion Kingman Brewster either concurred or affected to concur.

If the trial was fair after all, it was owing to the conduct of Judge Mulvey, a man well known for his liberal views, though referred to by the radicals of April 1970 as "Pig Mulvey." Experts from the Yale Law School kept watch on the case with a vigilant eye. Doubtless they too deserve credit. But as for the strike, I cannot begin to see in what way it advanced the cause of justice, and its effect on a less sympathetic judge might have been disastrous. In May the strike was experienced by most students as a freedom from year-end exams: unfortunately, it seems in the long run to have been almost as inconsequential as exams. In June, in July, in August, the war in Vietnam ground on, but the very students who loved Bobby Seale enough to call him "Bobby" did not hate the war enough to protest against it. Many had retired into a disenchantment as unreal as the idealism of a few months before. I liked this sudden quiescence no better than the hysteria that preceded it. But the two moods seemed to me then, as they do now, closely related.

Having said all this, I somehow find myself agreeing with Professor Ribuffo that "the spirit of the 60s has as much reproach to lay upon the 70s as the other way around." The student of ten years ago, when he said "I'm gonna take a year off and get my head together," had a look that was really a challenge: "*Try* and find insincerity in my face." The student who said to me yesterday, "I'm going to law school or med school, wherever the money is," had a different look. The 60s were a time of prosperity, interrupted by a long war that shook the confidence of the middle class, and the results of this instability were often good in themselves. It may be that a certain madness is inseparable from any era of social ferment. The last such era needs to be rescued from those who identify it with its unhappiest excesses—by those who will not speak as apologists for the same excesses—before we can see it accurately. "Bliss was it then to be alive." Perhaps not quite. But the two subjects that one cannot avoid these days, money and self, were less in the air: this seems to me to have been an unmixed good, and I do not attribute it solely to economic causes. The communal spirit of the time was partly bogus; but unselfishness can, to a degree, become a habit like other habits; and for many who were young in the 60s I believe that it did. A touch of the spirit remains with them. And I am afraid this is what the children of the 70s have lost, and what they can hardly miss until they look back with regret. □

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Bernard Rosenberg

Women's Place in Israel

Where They Are, Where They Should Be

Long is the list of grievances. Some are militantly advanced by the small Israeli feminist community, others spoken more quietly by Israeli women unaffiliated with any movement. All told, they ramify in every direction of an extraordinarily diverse little society. Whoever would generalize should stop to recall that at last count the Israeli population was drawn from 102 countries. (The official number of nationalities in Soviet Russia is 104.) Nearly half a million Arabs, most of them Moslem and some Christian, live alongside a substantial Western and denominationally heterogeneous Christian community. The Jewish majority is almost perfectly bisected into those who derive from Islamic and those from European cultures, a balance tipping more and more toward the progenitive "Orientals."

Family law is religious law. For its application, everyone, believer and non-believer alike, is classified as Moslem, Christian, or Jew. The Israeli government's law of 1951 excludes matters of marriage and divorce from the secular sphere; these matters are decided by the religious courts.

A Learned View

PROFESSOR ZEV FALK of the Hebrew University has a well-deserved reputation as the foremost Israeli authority on Jewish family law. His approach, as recorded in the *Israel Law Review* and more popularly over the radio, is readily summarized by him in private conversation. This approach is critical and constructive, and all the more interesting because Zev Falk is an observant Jew. (So is Chaim Cohen, a similarly enlightened legal scholar and justice of the Supreme Court who recently married abroad to avoid the rigors of Halachah (Talmudic law), which, *inter alia*, prohibit Cohens, that is, Kohanim, or members of a priestly tribe, from marrying divorced women.)

Zev Falk probably would not favor a change that he thinks is in any case politically impossible, namely, the subsitution of civil for religious marriage and divorce, as to whose *legality* the courts have traditional jurisdiction. Beyond that area Orthodoxy, in his judgment, has overreached itself. Prof. Falk sees no warrant in the Talmud or in Israeli law for rabbinical adjudication of problems that pertain to domicile, to a husband's obligations, to results of marriage or its dissolution. These religiously neutral problems could or should be resolved by civil authorities without legal offense to the rabbinate. Professor Falk's case comes to this: that a good many of the consequences and offshoots of polygyny (a marriage system allowing for more than one wife) still survive in Israel, even though polygyny itself was long ago abolished by the Sanhedrin.

As to domicile, the wife is required to follow her husband. If a wife is once unfaithful she forfeits support, whereas no sanctions are imposed on a husband for his infidelity. She must render him her income (from employment, not from property) and he retains all of his. The rules in the Rabbinical

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Court are tight for her, loose for him. A divorced or widowed woman with children does not enjoy the full rights of tax exemption conferred on a solitary man living with children in a motherless household. Neither is she eligible for the same amount of national insurance. If divorce takes place, and the marital home is not owned by either party, a "presumption of precedence" goes to the husband.

Discrimination Against Women

A "REBELLIOUS WOMAN" is one who has committed a legal act of desertion. The same act committed by a man does not invite comparable obloquy nor does it brand him as "rebellious." The rules governing domiciliary entrance of third parties differ for husband and wife. A husband may forbid entrance to his wife's friends and relatives. The wife has no such prerogative.

It is to help rectify such inequities that Professor Falk in all his Orthodoxy would demand the appointment of a woman to the Rabbinical Court. Why not? Halachah nowhere precludes the judgment of women in these matters or in matters of guardianship, adoption, and breach of promise. Already an Orthodox group of "women's liberationists" assembles without censure for sexually separate but equal study of the sacred legal texts.[1] Surely they provide a pool from which the family court could draw judges.

Ettia Simcha is not a judge, but she is a busy lawyer who spends much of her time fighting the political, personal, and social subordination of Israeli women. It is a source of outrage to her that religiously, and therefore "by legal definition, married women do not exist in this country. Only if they're divorced do they become legal entities." Thus, again, all income is technically the husband's. Since this rule applies even to spouses who have separated with an agreement by the husband to provide child support, he may deduct the required amount from her wages. The husband alone files an income tax report and the wife is denied access to any file or record of her own earnings. A man can easily disencumber himself of a wife who cannot divorce him even if he is a profligate, a certified psychotic, or a deserter. Should a woman be known to have had sexual relations with her former husband, she, but not he, is forbidden to remarry. An adulterous wife may be permitted to remarry anyone except her lover—by stipulation in the *get* (divorce contract), which her husband writes.

If a married man lives with another woman, their children are legitimate. Indeed, in Israel the children of all unwed mothers are legitimate. Only married women whose marital status is unacceptable to the Rabbinate can beget illegitimate children—a unique situation capable of producing much mischief. One notorious case has so far been litigated for over ten years. Hence the unsettled problem of *momzerim*. But *momzerim* are not bastards in any intelligible sense of the English word. *Momzerim* in Israel and bastards everywhere else are stigmatized; but *momzerim* suffer from the additional disability that they are permitted to marry only other *momzerim*.

Ettia Simcha agitates for the abolition of injustice based on sex. She works with the League for Women's Rights in Tel Aviv, a growing organization that is connected with WIZO (Women's International Zionist Organization). The League won a recent victory: women are at last paid social security directly "instead of having to run after their husbands."

Women as unalike as Shulamit Nardi, a veteran adviser to Israeli presidents, and Dorit Padan-Eisenstark, a militant social scientist, agree that the Yom Kippur War, or its aftermath, had a positive affect on women's rights. That war seems to have shaken Israelis more than any past war, or any swing in the economy. And with reason. Part of the story is simply scandalous, and Sophia Wyatt, a freelance journalist, has reported it in that spirit:

> As war raged in Syria and Africa, despite a severe shortage, about four thousand married

[1]The Orthodox Hapoel Hamizrachi specifically denied this right over 30 years ago.

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but qualified nurses "were grounded in their homes" for lack of day care centers in which they could leave their children.

Factories were forced to shut down. As many as 500 women in one factory ceased to work because "perhaps five male supervisors had to go to the front." Were there no women to replace them? On the contrary. Many could have taken over, but since foremanship is reserved for males, the factory had to be closed.

Bus service came to a standstill for the same reason. Some Romanian women arrived in Israel as licensed bus drivers. Even in the desperate crisis of October, they were not permitted to drive. [The *Jewish* ***Quarterly,*** Autumn, 1974]

Despite the influx of women from Eastern Europe with builders' skills, there are no women in construction work. Here a vestige of the medieval guild matches a vestige of the medieval family. But one cannot agree with Sophia Wyatt that all this relates only to the question of "women's plight." It has something to do with the very survival of a state under constant siege. Israel needs womenpower as much as it needs manpower. Given their wartime experience, officials have begun to see the point. Here and there women who took hold in October '73 have held on as administrators. The Technion in Haifa affords an example in which a woman became and remained office manager. Even then it was a struggle to wrench one responsible post away from the male establishment.

Observers in Israel report that a good number of the legal disabilities experienced by women can be surmounted or evaded by the sophisticated and affluent (e.g., the previously mentioned incident of Supreme Court Justice Cohen marrying abroad). This is true but not very satisfactory, since, first of all, large numbers of the poorer or ill-educated Israelis, especially those coming from North Africa, are not in a position to engage in these dodges, and, second, it is deplorable that in a modern and enlightened society, which Israel is, such provisions should still be on the books.

[2]See Dorit D. Padan-Eisenstark's article, "Are Israeli Women Really Equal?" in the *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, August 1973, pp. 538-45.

In the Labor Force

MEANWHILE, 365,000 women comprise almost one third of the labor force. Of these, 34 percent work in factories, a disproportionate number of them in possibly nonviable industries, such as textiles, which cannot compete with the sweat-labor products of Hong Kong and Taiwan. The women's total rate of unemployment is twice that of Israeli men.

Several studies, notably those conducted by the gifted sociologist Rivka Bar Yoseph, disclose a familiar occupational profile: the more formal education an Israeli woman has, the more likely she is to work for a long time. The woman from an Oriental or an Orthodox family is heavily underrepresented in almost every sector of the labor force, although markedly less so for a second-generation immigrant from an Afro-Asian country.[2] She typically looks after her several children and sometimes earns extra money as a domestic servant or an unskilled laborer. But that she should remain at home is no less a point of pride for her husband than it ever was for his bourgeois counterpart in the West.

A liberal leader and former Labor MK (Member of the Knesset) such as Zena Harmon doubts that the Oriental or the devout woman is sophisticated enough to want freedom from Halachic and patriarchal protection. That freedom would presumably aggravate the disorientation of women already sufficiently upset by cultural contact. In a way, Marcia Friedman would agree. To be sure, this radical feminist views the Oriental woman as a person who, while mostly illiterate and powerless, is nevertheless aware of her oppression: "She *sees* herself in a master-slave relationship." Yet Friedman does not feel that the Oriental woman should be "irresponsibly" stirred to action. "That's a powder-keg" which ought not to be prematurely detonated. Hence from this perspective more than half the women of Israel are not to be approached by the left unless it has a well-thought-out program for their rescue. So far no one in the movement

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has formulated such a program. The trickle-down theory predominates: let privileged women be more privileged and everyone will benefit.

Working women are guaranteed equal pay for equal work. Circumvention of that principle is notorious in Israel as elsewhere, either by juggling job titles or by other means. Equal pay exists in the Civil Service, as it does in the free professions, but with differences in fringe benefits. Across the board, upgrading and promotion are extraordinarily difficult.

While higher education proliferates and women comprise about 65 percent of the university population, as well as 50 percent of the teaching assistants, only a few, perhaps 5 percent of their sex, have become full professors. Credentials matter and, after acquiring them, Israeli academics know only too well the meaning of "publish or perish." Some married women in the academy complain that their dual role precludes a full commitment to scholarship such as men with their single role enjoy. More than enough of them publish *and* "perish."

Is it too hard to be a housewife and a scholar? Scores of successful women prove otherwise. Yet, among all the Israeli feminists I have met and read, only one, Rivka Bar Yoseph, was bold enough to declare that the dual or even the multiple role has its advantages: "With more than one role you can multiply your options, increase your rewards, retreat now, return later. This flexibility is hardly available to the person who has only one role." Men wholly enclosed in their single role had better make good at it in a big way. Few do. Without options, it is much more likely that the male professor will "perish" for failure to publish.

On the other hand and at every level, work for most women in Israel as in America is a sometime thing. It follows the usual cycle: work after completion of school interrupted by the bearing of children who tie mothers down until they grow up sufficiently so that a woman can reenter the job market. This cycle is a universal brake on advancement within any occupation. So men move steadily toward the higher echelons few women have the opportunity to reach.[3] How to break the cycle? Obviously not by encouraging childbirth. Besides, Israeli researchers report *that they have yet to find one woman in their land who does not want a child.* And, on the average, a child is what they increasingly settle for. Despite large Oriental families, the Israeli Jew is probably below zero population growth, below the U.S. rate of reproduction, below replacement.

Officials tend to reward motherhood. The variety of social services provided for pregnant women has been widely applauded, mostly for a three-month maternity leave with pay. Jobs are held for women who can reclaim them as long as one year after childbirth. Nevertheless, a succession of children makes for less and less steady employment.

Clearly, day-care centers are in order. Of these, the government, while promising more, supplies relatively few. I visited a model center, and my only caveat about it was the absence of male personnel. Small children besieged, hugged, and clung to me, crying, "Aba! Aba!" (Father! Father!)—so much did they seem to hunger for an adult male figure.

The restoration of fathers to a full parental role such as they ideally played in the kibbutzim is an exciting possibility that some educated women would like to promote. They envisage nursery schools that are not set apart from, but are more like extensions of, the family. UNICEF has funded two pilot schools of this nature. They are located in attractive community centers calculated to draw not only preschool children, but older siblings, parents, and grandparents. Diversified activities are age-graded, and to an American there is nothing exceptional about them except their latent purpose. They are subtly

[3]Further data, culled from the Israel Central Bureau of Statistics: of the total labor force, among men, 81 percent work full-time, 10 percent part-time; among men, 23 percent are listed as employers, self-employed, or members of cooperatives, and among women, 6 percent. Over 10 percent are classified as "unpaid family members," a category no doubt made up largely of women who help out in their husbands' businesses.

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designed to involve *men* in the child-rearing process. Mothers with offspring who attend these nursery schools listen to retellable stories and watch handicraft activity while learning about hygiene and child development. Fathers who come for plumbing and other vocational courses find themselves drawn into the classroom. The family unit is reconstituted in this unfamiliar setting.

Problems of the Family

TOUCH THE FAMILY and you strike the central nervous system of Israeli politics. There one finds what Eliezer Jaffe, of the Hebrew University, calls "a certain amount of schizophrenia." On the one hand, government officials favor an increase in the population. On the other hand, families with four or more children, of which there may be 120,000, are generally stigmatized for their ignorance, their poverty—and their fecundity. Few speak for them. Avraham Donino, a Haifa town councillor, is an exception. Himself the product of a classically large Moroccan Jewish family, Donino has created a substantial lobby and organized it under the name *Zahavi*, meaning "My Gold." Zahavi is also an acronym taken from a Hebrew phrase that repels some modern Israelis: Rights for the Family Blessed with Many Children. Blessed? But is it not a curse to have many children? Donino does not think so. But suppose it is. He merely points out that 10 percent of the families in Israel raise 40 percent of the children. There they are, poorly housed, poorly educated, poorly fed, and widely scorned. Prescribed contraception and legal abortion will not banish them or their problems.

What to do with these people? Donino has a plan. Since the present system imposes low status on large underprivileged families, he thinks they should be guaranteed a minimum income without taxes, provided with one kilo of sugar a day, and given enough bread to assuage their hunger. Nor will he be put off by talk about inflation, financial crises, and business cycles. "These families are suffering. And this kind of welfare costs more than real help that would alleviate distress and make citizens out of drones."

What else? Donino wants action on the housing front. There are too many little four-story buildings in which 16 families with a hundred children are cramped together. Donino's pressure group petitions for community service and neighborhood planning. He argues that maintenance of overcrowded housing is costlier than the investment required to make life more tolerable for a sizable part of Israel's population. Wives are the worst victims. They suffer the most severe (and unattended) nervous tension, induced in part by the sight of their disadvantaged and too frequently delinquent sons and daughters. To Donino, all this seems avoidable. He points out that in the extended family grandparents enjoy "positive relations" with their children's children. Meanwhile, the Israeli government "invests heavily" in nursing homes. How like America! But in Israel? What for? "Just give us more space in our own homes. It will be a lot cheaper." And there will be fewer pathologies. But Marcia Friedman is opposed to the kind of legislation Zahavi has pressed upon a divided Knesset. "It's because she doesn't understand the dynamics of large family life." Donino points to the immemorial virtues of mutual aid, marital devotion, and honor to the aged. In his enthusiasm, he sounds not too different from the kibbutz zealot.

The Zahavi Proposals

MOST PEOPLE REFUSE to go on welfare (and in this they strongly resemble the Jewish poor of urban America). Donino insists that his war is for the masses who live perpetually on the border of poverty. Now the tendency is to curtail social services. "Who suffers first? Not the middle class. Not the workers organized in trade unions. My people suffer first—and last."

"Perhaps," Donino concedes, "there are too many of us. Well, whoever wants to plan a family is free to do so. Meanwhile, the reality is this: 350,000 children needlessly growing up wrong."

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Zahavi's proposed legislation has its backers even among those who deplore the proliferation of large families. A few facts help explain why:

- 100,000 families in Israel have four or more children, which is to say, they include over 700,000 individuals.
- Nearly 92 percent of the 160,000 officially disadvantaged youth in Israel are Sephardic children, of Middle Eastern background, from large and poor families.
- Close to 100,000 Israeli families, the majority of Middle Eastern origin, live in substandard housing.
- About 30,000 adolescents, mostly Sephardim between the ages of 14 and 18, are out of school and out of work.
- As of 1973, over 40,000 families lived in apartments holding at least three persons per room.

The *Jerusalem Post* of May 22, 1974, tells us of legislation drawn up by Yaacov Neeman, a professor of law at Bar Ilan University, that

> . . . would require the government to determine a basic subsistence level for each child in the family. Based on this, the government would assure that each child, no matter how large the family, is afforded this level of subsistence through income grants or a system of negative taxation . . . . Zahavi is also asking that the mother of a large family working as a housewife be considered a working woman who earns 30% of her husband's income, with the concomitant tax credits due every working woman.

This last demand is frequently echoed by professional women. Here at least is a basis for sexual solidarity across class and ethnic lines.

Furthermore, the idealization of large families need not be the barrier that it is. For what else animated Degania in 1909? During that year, Arthur Ruppin, director of the Zionist Organization in Jerusalem, authorized seven young men and women to establish a completely cooperative agrarian community. Degania is generally known as the first kibbutz, but its founders preferred the term *kvutzah,* which connotes a *small* group. "They envisioned a society that would be somewhat on the order of *an expanded family*, and thought that about 20 persons was an optimum beyond which they should not go" (emphasis added),[4] as Ronald Sanders has remarked in his analysis of Israeli collectives.

The first kibbutzniks were in their late teens and early twenties. Unmarried, fired with the enthusiasm of youth, they could work hard, take meals in their communal dining hall, and then talk, sing, and dance until dawn. Spurning the bourgeois family out of which they came, kibbutzniks were able to think of themselves as one big family. Within that structure a large measure of sexual equality had to prevail. Socialist idealism required such equality, and frontier conditions (in Ottoman Palestine as in colonial America) reinforced it. Crops were planted and harvested, bridges built, roads paved, and swamps cleared. Both sexes had to learn from scratch. After all, most immigrants of the Second Aliyah, who came from 1904 to 1913, were students.

These students succeeded far better than any American communards. Yet all came to grief over "the woman question." Ronald Sanders thinks it is inherent in the utopian community that aging, mating, and reproducing are enough to account for the failure. In time, energy lags and what is a lark for the young person is a chore for his or her older comrade. A feminist such as Hazel Sezer Kahan who lived on a kibbutz with some discomfort because of the sexual subordination to which she, but not her male companion, was subject, writes that kibbutz women tend "increasingly to seek and revert to traditional feminine roles, the very ones their mothers fought so hard to escape. For example, the tendency in kibbutzim to consider family sleeping and eating arrangements a replacement for communal ones is largely the result of instigation by women." (*New Outlook*, June 1973. p. 23.)

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[4]"The changing Kibbutz," *Midstream*, June 1965, p. 51.

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Indeed the children's house, an institution that freed kibbutz mothers as well as fathers to work in the fields, is rapidly disappearing. A major reason may be that the fields themselves are disappearing as more and more Israeli collectives undergo industrialization. Agricultural kibbutzim, much reduced in number, tend to retain their egalitarianism. Let production center in,—say, a cement factory—and men, to the extent that they were ever there, leave the kitchen, the laundry, and the classroom. Men train for war in a land that is ever on the alert and their work in an industrial kibbutz is that of a proletariat. The proportion of kibbutz women who cook, wash, clean, nurture, instruct and raise the young is greater than that of Israeli women at large.[5]

No doubt Tamar Breznitz-Svidovsky, a Hebrew University psychologist, is correct when she asserts that during and after the Yom Kippur war women "wanted to go to bed to have babies—even unmarried women sometimes; I guess it was to preserve the race" (*Newsweek*, January 20, 1975). Official statistics would seem to bear her out: in 1974 Israel registered 84,000 births as compared to 66,000 in 1973. But we have no breakdown of these statistics. In general, the Arab-Israeli birthrate continues to soar, with the Oriental-Israeli birthrate perhaps not so far behind, and the Ashkenazim's—Jews from Central and Eastern Europe—the lowest of them all. There is no evidence that this differential fertility does not now obtain or will soon cease to be operative. Nor can we accept as *prima facie* fact *Newsweek's* opinion that ". . . one casualty of the last war was the budding women's liberation movement." To support this view, the magazine quotes an anonymous psychologist who explains that "The boys went out to fight and the women stayed home and waited." And, "When they came home, the women pampered them. As a result, women's lib went out the window." If so, it strode back through many a door—but not the kibbutz door. That aperture, this time through no fault of the state, is closed more tightly than ever before. For better or worse, kibbutz assemblies with full representation for what is again the distaff side, are voting women back into traditionalism.

[5]This statement is true but tricky. *All* able-bodied kibbutzniks work—which is obviously not the case in Israeli society at large.

In the Army

WOMEN do not have equality of entry into the army. Under "universal conscription," almost half the draft-aged women are not drafted. Of these, some do not wish to be drafted, but many find that they are not acceptable. Approximately 24 percent are rejected as "poorly educated," a category that does not exist for males who get drafted even if they are illiterate. The consequences of this disparity can be alarming. Poorly educated girls—and boys—come mostly from the Oriental population. Compulsory education terminates at age 14; so does all formal education for a large number of children from Arab-speaking families. The vast majority of girls who drop out become mothers' helpers. Thousands run away from home. A number go to Elath, Israel's "sin city," where they find pimps and become prostitutes. Others get caught up in the drug traffic. In any case, many are subject to arrest, adjudication, and conviction, with or without incarceration. Then they have "records," and records make them ineligible for military service.

Hence the educated Western women are most heavily represented in Israel's best melting pot. For the less well-educated Eastern women who would benefit most from it, there is no vocational training program in the army. Such a program does exist for men who can acquire skills in the army that are unavailable to them in civilian life. Ex-Defense Minister Shimon Peres, chided about this inequity, "promised to do something about it." Meanwhile, the preference for women who already have certain skills is easy to understand. For these conscripted women are forbidden to bear arms. And while few would go so far as MK Friedman, who told me that she "would rather be at the front lines than in the kitchen because it's easier," not all

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of those who comprise a semi-elite group rejoice in their opportunity to be typists, teachers, messengers, gymnasts, or singers. Those who believe that their primary role in the army is to boost male morale sometimes feel they might just as well be camp followers as "soldiers."

Contemporary feminists cannot but regard compulsory service with its "traditional" activity for some women between the ages of 18 and 26, for a 20- (now 24-) month period, as one more sign of regression. Annabelle Yuval, an American living in Israel since 1952, writes that:

> There is a tradition in the country for women to participate in the defense of the Jewish community. Women have always played such a role in the Yishuv. In World War II, 3,000 of them volunteered in the British Army. There were women who parachuted into occupied Europe with the main purpose of assisting Jews to escape from the Nazis, and there were fighting women in the Palmah and Haganah during the '30's, '40's and the War of Independence. But the women soldiers in Israel's Defense Forces today do not fight. Their duties include clerical [estimated to be 70 percent—B.R.], medical, housekeeping and communications work [which I assume is a euphemism for carrying messages—B.R.]. They also pack parachutes, teach, and promote cultural activities in the development areas. ["The Israeli Woman," *Judaism,* Spring 1973, p. 234.]

The War Widows

NAOMI GOLAN, a professor of social work, is most concerned with the women, very many of them hardly more than girls, who comprise Israel's 12,000 war widows. These women stayed home and, in war after war, many found themselves bereft of husbands who often had been theirs for merely a few months. Professor Golan speaks of a double transition that these women ideally undergo: from wifehood to widowhood—and from widowhood to womanhood. Her studies reveal that quite a few are stuck fast in the first stage of shock and denial.

The fantasy persists that a miraculous reappearance will occur, a fantasy partly sustained in 1973 by the inordinately long time Egypt took to release its list of Israeli POWs. Syrian soldiers decapitated or otherwise mutilated Israeli soldiers and left their bodies to disintegrate. This hideous practice made identification more uncertain for a number of Israeli combatants. Then there were the irrecoverable bodies—each of which produced one more *agunah.* The *agunah* is a woman forbidden by religious law to remarry unless the remains of her presumably dead husband have been found. This problem is an old one. It was especially troublesome for the generation of immigrant women whose husbands were cremated in Hitler's death factories. It is newly troublesome for the young *agunot* whose husbands have perished in battle without leaving any traceable remains. Lacking special dispensation that is granted on appeal, one case at a time, these women are perpetual widows. Their fate is a sore spot on the body social.

The Abortion Issue

MANY SUCH SPOTS are to be found on that body. But everywhere, symptomatic if not yet systemic, relief is in sight. So, the *agunah* now is perceived as a victim whose unnecessary sorrows cannot be indefinitely prolonged. Family planning is commonly endorsed, and for the last two years the only major doubt about an abortion law was whether it would be weak or strong. Marcia Friedman, who led the battle for abortion, met with less resistance than any expert could have anticipated. The Orthodox and super-Orthodox were predictably adamant in their opposition. It hardly mattered. Habib Shimoni, a member of the Alignment (Labor and parties allied with it) sponsored a bill to supersede the present law, which is a relic of Mandatory Palestine. This law prescribes a five-year prison term for any person performing an illegal abortion; it also subjects women to prosecution for submitting to the operation. Subsequent court rulings have mitigated the

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severity of this law by recognizing that the preservation of a woman's life or health may justify terminating a pregnancy.

The situation was much like our own before abortion laws were liberalized. In Israel the official estimate of illegal abortion runs from 40,000 to 60,000 per annum. The unofficial estimate is 80,000, which, if accurate, means that one out of every three pregnancies is illegally aborted. Social workers can recommend and ostensibly secure legal abortions for their clients, but only through the Ministry of Health. And that ministry, apart from its head, is allegedly in the hands of the National Religious party.

Former Minister of Health Victor Shemtov, a left-wing (Mapam) secularist, diplomatically admits that abortion poses a serious moral dilemma. He even offered qualified support for Mr. Shimoni's proposal in the Knesset, adding only one requirement: prior consultation with a "medical-sociological committee."

The moderate Shimoni bill would permit abortion without fear of prosecution for pregnancy in several stipulated circumstances. A second and stronger bill introduced by seven Knesset members would have enabled a woman to "order" an abortion during the first 12 weeks of her pregnancy by walking into her gynecologist's office for that purpose. When these measures went to committee in 1975, both were opposed by members of the National Rights party and the Torah Front. The press reported impassioned protest by Menahem Porsh, Kalman Kahana, and Pinhas Scheinman—all religionists to the right of their merely Orthodox colleagues. Rabbi Porsh intoned: "You are even worse than Pharaoh. Pharaoh wanted to drown only the male Jewish children; you want to kill the females as well." A final fillip, as it appeared in the *Jerusalem Post*:

> Just before the House rejected the religious Members' demands to remove the bills from the agenda, Poale Agudah's Avraham Verdiger shouted, "The only thing that should be aborted is our Government!"
>
> To this, Shulamit Aloni quipped, "Too late—twelve weeks have passed."

MK Aloni can respond to the opposition with a touch of humor in part because the Civil Rights party, originally the Women's Rights party, which she created, maintained that it was not antireligious but only antitheocratic. The Yom Kippur War caused a postponement of the elections that were to have been held in 1973. Two weeks into the campaign, pollsters projected five to seven seats for the party. After the War, with widespread political polarization and an attendant consolidation of previously disparate *groupsecles*, Aloni's party still took three seats. There can be little doubt that this little triumph was fueled to some extent by cynicism about the Labor party from which Aloni had resigned. So there was a protest vote as there was a women's vote, in addition to a *progressive* religious vote. The change in party name indicated no diminution of interest in women's rights, but a broadening of the base for reform in Israeli politics.

As for abortion, the Knesset finally passed a compromise law on January 31, 1977. It will take effect one year from that date. The bill overrode "a storm of protest from rabbis and conservatives who called the new legislation 'a license to mass infanticide.'" (Associated Press, February 2, 1977.) Its most controversial provision permits abortions for unmarried women or girls under 16. Another clause sanctions abortion "if the pregnancy is likely to cause severe harm to the woman or her children because of harsh social and family conditions." The new law does not permit abortion on demand nor does it specifically permit abortions for women with numerous children. But reasons of health, possible deformity of the fetus, impregnation by rape or incest, and if the mother is over 40 are all now legal bases for abortion. Seven of the nine women MPs, led by Haika Grossman, voted in favor of a bill that had 24 sponsors and passed by a show of hands.

Parliamentary Politics

GENDER, as we know from bitter experience, is a poor clue to political persuasion. Moreover, there are fewer women in the Knesset today

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than there were in 1948, and they are more evenly spread over a broad spectrum of tokenism. Many who struggle for women's rights are disenchanted with direct involvement in parliamentary politics. Zena Harmon, an ex-MK who says that she "only ran at Golda's behest" in the first place, feels that more can be accomplished behind the scenes than on the spot. Looking at the "free world" (it doesn't take long these days), she sees a general decline in parliamentary power that goes with a general increase in executive power. Why bother to be an MK? She makes an additional point with some acerbity. Male parliamentarians meet interminably; men are able to talk politics day and night because their womenfolk stay home tending to housewifely tasks. Zena Harmon is not at all surprised to learn that in one recent American election, a nun and a lesbian—running as such—won impressive victories: "They are ideally suited to work that is still too exhausting for wives and mothers." Celibacy or family estrangement (as with Golda Meir and Indira Gandhi) is the putative alternative for women who plunge into parliamentary politics. Curiously, Marcia Friedman, despite the relative success she has enjoyed as a left-wing feminist in the Knesset, expresses no more enthusiasm for that institution than does Zena Harmon. But her preference is not so much to work behind the scenes as to transform them. Friedman's program is global. For the proletariat she substitutes "Women of the World," grimly contending that their liberation is "impossible in one country." In this thesis one finds no intimation of irony, no sense that it is a comic or a pathetic echo of Trotsky's formula for all workers of the world—or none.

That conventional politics and extraparliamentary means are not to be excluded as vehicles for attaining proximate ends in one small country, we take for granted. It is therefore mildly heartening to quote a recent dispatch from the Anglo-Jewish press (*The Jewish Week*, June 13-29, 1976):

> The Moetzet Hapoalot, Israeli sister organization of Pioneer Women, has embarked on an extensive campaign to encourage leadership of women in political life and public involvement. Mrs. Tamar Eshel, MH secretary general, here on a recent visit, explained that her organization wanted qualified women to take a more active part in public life in Israel . . . : "We were caught napping with our pressures down. What was accepted naturally 25 years ago is no longer there and we have to make up for lost time."

On the truly apocalyptic issue of survival, Israel was caught napping "with its pressures down" between 1967 and 1973—and barely aroused itself in time. On the question of women's rights, while far from fully awake, it is unlikely ever again to slumber without an accompanying nightmare.

It seems probable that for no more than a very small minority of Israelis the issue of women's rights now does figure as a major one. Other things—war and peace, domestic economy, internal corruption—strike most Israelis as more urgent. Nevertheless, it is a potential benefit of a democratic society that sometimes the less urgent problems can be tackled more readily than the more urgent. The visitor to Israel doubts that ever again will the women of that country be quiescent or their demands unheard. □

ADDENDUM: The above was completed before Israel's 1977 election, and does, we hope, help to explain its depressing outcome. A fragile right-wing coalition has come into being, and Menahem Begin, leader of the Likud bloc, appears to be as stunned as his opponents by his victory. But, at this writing, Begin's fate is tied to two religious parties whose presence can only signify a temporary setback for women's rights. Should the coalition collapse or even be infused with more liberal elements, the setback is bound to be of brief duration. □

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Jean-Paul Alata

In an African Prison: A Memoir

Late in 1976, the French Ministry of State for the Interior banned distribution of a book by Jean-Paul Alata, Prison d'Afrique *(Editions du Seuil); the action was taken on the basis of a law of July 29, 1881 that authorizes the government to regulate the distribution of "works of foreign origin that are written in the French language and published abroad and in France."*

This law, which had lapsed, was revived in 1939 by a decree-law aiming to prevent the introduction of Nazi writings into France. Alata's book is not the first to suffer from an aberrant application of what was in principle an anti-Nazi decree.

The present ban, which was brought about by pressure from Sékou Touré, affects a work that strains Franco-Guinean relations. (Jean-Paul Alata is French by birth; subsequently, he opted for Guinean citizenship; in 1975, French authorities, claiming that legally he was a French national, secured his release from prison in Guinea; since his return to France, he has resumed the status of French citizen.) Alata's book is an account of what befell him in Guinea: a personal friend of President for Life of the Republic of Guinea Sékou Touré and a well-placed Guinean political figure, Alata found himself one of the numerous Guineans who were tortured in the Borio camp on the sole decision of an autocratic President.

The passages from Alata's book published here describe a torture scene, collective madness in Conakry, and a telephone conversation between the prisoner Jean-Paul Alata and President Sékou Touré.

Projection Room Technique:
January 13, 1971

A harsh light bores through my eyelids. I did not hear the door open, but the guardroom officer is shaking me by the shoulder.

"Get up. The committee's asking for you."

Outside, the air is fresh, and there are stars. Once again, the heavy iron-plated door, the high-wheeled jeep in which Adjutant Oularé is waiting for me.

"You've been sick, Alata?"

"How do you know that?"

He laughs. "The Minister wants to be kept informed about everything that concerns you. You're an important figure. Cissé reported to him that you've been sick. It wasn't serious?"

"When it's the heart, it's always serious."

"Well, show a little understanding presently, and your troubles will soon be over."

I don't answer. What have I to answer? By now I am convinced that Ismaël[1] is trying to buttress a very fragile pyramid that he's constructed on lies.

There were only two people in the committee room. The Minister and Seydou. The center light was on. No mysterious greetings

Reprinted, with permission, from the December 1976 issue of *Esprit*.

[1]Ismaël Touré, chairman of the Revolutionary Committee of Inquiry.

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this time. With a sweeping gesture of his hand, Ismaël pointed to a crude stool.

"Sit down. I hope that you were well cared for and that you're no longer worried about your heart."

To be obliged to thank one's tormentor for his solicitude! I had steeled myself for a tough attack. These paternal remarks threw me off balance.

"I was, yes, cared for, Comrade Minister."

He went on: "Are you thirsty?" Without waiting for my answer: "Oularé, go find a glass of water for our friend."

The gendarme went into the next room. I heard a refrigerator door slam. He came back carrying a tall misted glass, which he set down on the table within my reach.

When I hesitated, the Minister smiled and gestured toward the glass. "Go on and drink. We're not torturers, after all. Drink!"

Oh, the taste of that water as it revived every nerve end in the membranes of my mouth. I trembled with pleasure. Oulare's hand pushed the glass from my lips.

"Slowly, slowly, M. Alata. Not too much, and not too fast."

Still smiling that same smile, the Minister continued: "Unfortunately, I've nothing else to offer you, but if your conversation is satisfactory, I'll have you brought some bread and hot coffee."

Until then, the thought of food had not moved me much, but the liquid I had just absorbed had aroused my hunger. My temples were wet with sweat.

Seydou had been silent, but now he came onstage, addressing his "boss."

"Comrade, may I remind you that we have a busy schedule? This man has been comforted quite enough. In my opinion, you're coddling him."

Ismaël looked at me thoughtfully, as I sat holding my empty glass awkwardly because of the handcuffs.

"My friend Keita doesn't seem overfond of you. I do hope you will not put me to shame by refusing in any way to cooperate. Actually, that makes him very happy. He's not one for gentle tactics."

Suddenly abandoning his amiable smile and tone, he leaned forward: "What do you know about the invasion, Alata?"

I started. "The invasion?"

His voice rose. "Don't make me repeat. What do you know about the invasion? You're aware of the role your country—France—played in it. Tell us what you yourself really did."

I had got hold of myself again. This was ideal terrain. There were numerous witnesses to my actions during the days from November 22nd to 24th.

"I've already given an account of my actions in this connection. The President knows that from the very first shots I fought—"

I had no time to finish. Seydou interrupted me brusquely: "Dog! White pig! Stop hiding behind the President! He's been too kind to you. You've betrayed him all down the line."

Seydou was literally spitting out his words. He turned to Ismaël: "This man's nothing but a dirty slob, and I've always said so. He's got to be shown that we're not playing games, that we've got ways to bring the most stubborn among them around. We've got to put the screws on him!"

Ismaël quieted him with a wave of his hand, but now he was not smiling. A gray pallor spread over his face. "It's a fact, Alata. You're not being exactly amenable. We treat you like a comrade, like a friend almost, and you take us for children! I dislike using the means of persuasion my companion favors, but one must admit that they work miracles in searching out the truth."

The truth! All fear had left me, and I laughed scornfully. I was in full possession of myself, my head was clear. The Minister had noticed the sneer. The furrows on his face deepened. He pounded on the table.

"Not amenable, Alata, and not prudent! . . . Yes, not prudent," he repeated, choosing his words with care. "That interests you, does it? So, give some thought to this little problem and go along now with Oularé. You say you fought for us the day of the attack? We have proof that you did indeed take up arms, but it was to help the mercenaries. Who was with

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you that day? Who was it who was never out of your sight? By now he should be here, before us! You don't think so? Oularé, take him away."

I felt myself being lifted from the stool by two stalwart guards who had come in at the adjutant's beckoning. As I was passing through the doorway, I heard "Think of your wife and her child, too!"

Tenin! Jean-François and Tenin!

I scarcely noticed their dragging me away, their almost carrying me into the darkness of the camp courtyard toward other lights, other rooms. Forbidden faces came between me and them. The face of Tenin, my dearly beloved, her belly misshapen by pregnancy.

Tenin? No. They wouldn't dare. A woman! Still almost a child! But Jean-François, who chose to stand by me in the hardest moments of my life, when to a man Europeans were turning away from me, a traitor, a renegade? This son who accepted his father's marriage to a black woman, who came to live with us? . . . They're not about to arrest him, oh no, not break him too, this boy who has given himself with such passion to the continent of Africa! . . .

I am so absorbed in my inner revolt that I no longer hear, no longer see anything. But then I am dumped on the floor in a small, glaringly lighted room. A kick to the ribs brings me to my feet. I scowl at the man who brutalizes me in such fashion; it is an instinctive reaction of my whole body, and it makes him roar with laughter.

"You're not in yokr office at the President's Palace anymore, you slob, you're here. Take off your jacket."

I indicate my manacled wrists, and I take note of the décor. On the floor, a quantity of gravel; under the light, it looks red. In one corner, heavy truck tires, piled one on the other. Under the ceiling, a beam has been installed at wall height. Attached to it is a heavy pulley, from which a rope is hanging. In another corner, a small white wood table. Resting on it, an oblong box, probably of bakelite.

In the wall facing me, an iron door with a grand-guignol inscription in red: DANGER OF DEATH.

They remove, or rather they rip off my handcuffs. I am stripped of my coat the way a rabbit is peeled of its skin. With one hand, Oularé stops the guards.

"M. Alata, don't let yourself be ruined. Talk now, before it's too late."

Talk about what? I shrug. "I've nothing to say, and you know it. Your boss is crazy."

Oularé turns on his heel, flinging a brief order to the guards: "*Won khai* [Let's get going]."

They throw me, face down, on the floor. They pull my arms back violently. It's as if a saw were cutting into my forearms and elbows. When I struggle, I feel the weight of a shod foot against the small of my back. Arms and shoulders are wrenched back still more brutally. I am too corpulent for my elbows to meet in this position, yet the two men manhandling me are not content until they have trussed me up like a fowl. Despite my desire not to demean myself but to put on a brave show, I do groan, for the pain is too intense. My battered rib cage will not let me breathe. The ropes fettering me are not ordinary ropes. They bite into, they saw the flesh. They are tied so tightly that already I can no longer feel my hands or wrists.

The men are laughing. "You look great like that, General!"[2]

They yank me up, then make me kneel on the gravel. I had not understood its purpose before.

"You stay there quietly," one of my torturers orders. When I try to lower myself to one side, he fetches me up with a kick from his booted foot.

Within a few moments, I can no longer tell which is causing me the more searing pain: the ropes that oppress my chest and gnaw into my

[2]Since independence, a kind of custom has been created in Guinea. All those who occupy currently or who for quite a long time did occupy posts that carry a title including the word "general"—secretary-general of a branch (political), secretary-general of a region (administrative), inspector-general, etc.—are addressed as general.

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flesh, or the hundreds of sharp-pointed stones that are slowly digging into my knees.

Oularé comes back; he is worried, hurried.

"A message from the President, M. Alata. He begs you in the name of your friendship not to compromise everything by being stubborn. He wants to do something for you. Have confidence in him and speak out."

I still had the strength to lift my head and look the adjutant in the face. I remember perfectly what I thought to myself at that moment: But he's not laughing! The swine! He's talking to me seriously about friendship! Is he making it up? Or has the patron really sent me this message after handing me over to be abused?

I must have produced a very feeble smile.

"If it really is he who's sent you, tell him I know nothing. I've served him always, like a stupid fool."

Oularé raises his arms to heaven. "You've asked for it, that's for sure." And to the guards: "Get on with it!"

One of them comes over and pinches my earlobes. A second man, sitting by the table in the corner, turns a crank rapidly. My body arches like a bent bow. Thousands of sparks flash before my eyes. It seems as if the pain that bores into my brain must explode it. Then, suddenly, everything is black. Coming to, I see that I have fallen on my side. The pain returns. To myself, I count, "One . . . two . . . three . . . four . . . five . . . . "

All this is painful, but bearable. The essential thing is to steel myself for the electric shock, which recurs every five seconds. I'll be able to hold out.

I was no longer falling down, my groans were less loud. The guard who was operating the magneto began to laugh. "Fat smart-aleck!"

The next discharge came after only one or two seconds. And it was a different intensity. It came in bursts so brutal, so powerful that I tried to get up to escape from them. The pain penetrated my skull, my eyeballs. When it stopped—the way a whip stops cracking—I fell like a log. Then the pain returned; the guard, still laughing, was playing with his rheostat. Now I am unable to brace myself against the brutal assault of the current or to foresee how long it will last.

Sometimes it continues for interminable seconds—almost as if it were dawdling—then by degrees it mounts to an intensity likely to blast my eyeballs from their sockets; at other times, it merely grazes but then bashes the brain with a single charge, turning it into a bloc of molten lava.

I have lost control. I feel underneath me that I have urinated. I howl, yet this screaming jumping jack is not I. Every organ in me is independent, is trying, on its own, to escape from the pain.

For how long? Who could say? I come to find myself stretched full length on the floor despite the ropes that have turned my hands to ice. I no longer feel anything. That guard over there, let him get as upset as he likes, twirl his magneto, fiddle with his rheostat: nothing happens. Have I attained that threshold of pain beyond which, they say, one no longer perceives pain? The magneto-man chafes at getting no reactions. He comes and turns me over with his foot. "Pig! You've worked the electrodes loose!"

He pummels me as he pulls me upright. Another guard disappears, to return with Oularé.

"More reasonable, Alata?"

I shake my head painfully. I can scarcely see. My brain is a boiling lake in which nothing remains afloat but fierce hatred for these men. I do not hold it against them that they are torturing me but that they all too visibly enjoy it.

"All right, let's get on with it. We'll have to proceed to stage two. Very disagreeable for you, since you have a young wife."

The guards laugh and exchange crude jokes in Malinke. They have to do mainly with my sexual parts, and the difficulty my wife will have in being satisfied, if indeed I do recover.

"Well, after all," one of them says, with a sigh of mock commiseration, "he's already got children and his wife's pregnant. He doesn't need them anymore!"

I understand this only when my shorts are

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roughly pulled down, exposing my wretched nakedness. Shame sweeps over me. To be stripped bare in front of these hilarious, strapping fellows is to become a subman. In a flash, I see in my mind's eye a film sequence about the German camps which shows a long line of Jews being forced to regain their barracks by trotting, naked, across the entire camp. Now, only now, do I understand their humiliation.

The look I turn on Oularé is such that he averts his head.

"You're asking for it. We did everything to spare you. And don't forget, this leaves its mark. You'll never be the same when you leave."

Leave? I no longer even think of ever getting out. How will I be able, ever, to live with the memory of this humiliation—humiliation suffered at the hands of men I have always defended? . . .

I feel a nip on the skin of my testicles, another on a fold of skin on my belly. And immediately it all begins again. This time, they have left me stretched out, but my feet have been bound.

I scream. The pain is so agonizing that I wish I might die of it. Merciful God, may my heart give out—now. Death is easier than to have testicles and anus burned. Than the sensation of scalding mud being pushed into my bowels. . . My sex is no longer part of me. That makes me howl. I feel as if I am being thrust into live coals. Oularé reappears; he orders the men to stop.

"You're lucky, M. Alata. The Minister has received orders that you are not to be injured. The President is still hopeful that you will understand. We're going to use other methods. Release him and put on his clothes."

I can no longer hold myself upright, and I stagger. When my ropes—I notice that they are actually electric wire—begin to drop away from my body, I start to howl again. My hands, my wrists are dead. The blood flowing toward the extremities of my forearms slams into a wall, and with each pulse beat it sends back a wave of pain. The adjutant calls one of the guards over, murmurs a few words to him, pointing to my forearms. The man nods, picks up my jacket from the floor, seizes my right arm, which is bleeding at the elbow, and falls to rubbing the wound the way you rub down a horse.

My screams redouble. The pain now is as great as when the ordeal began. The second guard is supporting me on my feet, and the man attending to my arms takes advantage of the fact that Oularé has just left to whisper in my ear, "You must forgive us, General. We only do what we're told. Nobody wants to join you in jail, but people love you."

I find the strength to smile. "A strange kind of love," I answer, under my breath. Then, aloud, I add, "At least, let go of me now, so that the circulation can start up again by itself."

The guard shakes his head. He seizes my left arm, and subjects it to the same treatment.

"No, no, it's for your own good, really. We know what has to be done. When you've got it in for somebody, you leave him alone—like that, with no rubbing. If he's been tied up for more than an hour, he won't be able to use his arms for a couple of weeks. Rubbing you very hard straight off hurts you now, but tomorrow or the day after you'll be able to hold things almost normally."

The adjutant returns. I am helped into my clothes; my bloody jacket is draped over my shoulders. One of the guards makes as if to put on the handcuffs. Oularé takes them from him, and keeps them. To me, he simply signals that I am to follow him.

Carnival in Conakry: July 25, 1971

THE ANNEX was a group of buildings previously occupied by subaltern units of the gendarmes which had been hastily converted into a prison. Windows had been walled up, leaving only the regulation ten-by-fifteen centimeter slits. Locks had been removed and replaced by bolts, and the doors had been reinforced by iron bars . . . .

Oularé led me inside, armed with new equipment—a metal bed with springs and a foam pillow. I was securely locked in. Alone

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in what seemed to me an enormous room, and bereft of companionship, I let myself sink into deep despair.

Rain was falling in torrents, beating on the roof with a monotonous rhythm and casting a pall over Conakry. Inside my new cell, which had no electricity, it was as dark as pitch. My thoughts were somber.

I was convinced that getting in touch directly with the President would resolve many problems. If he were informed by a trustworthy man about the cruelties that had been inflicted in his name in order to establish impudent lies, he would react. But since Ismaël was running this particular show, he would allow no such thing, for, ipso facto, it would mean ruining himself. So I could not hope to be set free soon, indeed not for a long time.

It was essential not to dwell on the past. I had to find the courage to envisage the final moment, when the years of struggle and misery would end. The last months had been so excruciating, and this prison was so hard to endure that I suppressed my will to live and believed myself capable of serenely contemplating the end. But how was that end to be brought about?

The frightful faces of the four bodies swaying all day long beneath the Tumbo Bridge both revolted and terrified me. The prisoners had had long discussions about the circumstances surrounding the executions but not the condemned men's last moments, for no one had been present. It was even asserted that they were already dead by the time they were hung, because their faces bore no traces of their suffering. People who had contemplated their faces—sometimes for as long as several hours—found them calm and peaceful. No one had witnessed their final, grotesque convulsions, but all of Conakry had had to endure what one reporter, more cynical and insensitive than the others, had called the Conakry carnival.

"It's carnival time in Conakry!" he had cried, by way of describing how infamous furies danced below the bodies, which had soon been bloated by the hot January sun. The journalist had made much of how these women used long sticks to obscenely jiggle the sexual organs of the executed men. An old woman was forced by these same Megaeras to dance beneath one of the bodies; she fainted. Was she his mother? a near relative? The laughing and singing went on for hours, while, slightly to one side, hundreds of men, motionless and grave (Peouls, for the most part), fed their hatred on the spectacle.

Yet Guineans were naturally good and peaceable people. Until 1965, there was not a single village in which a foreigner would not feel safe. And Guinean hospitality was famous . . . .

Of one thing I was convinced. Each and every incendiary had been closely watched. The relatives of the dead would never forget. In Guinea, families are too extended, too complex, still too clan-minded for these mad women ever to escape punishment. The *cortes*[3] that appease the souls of the dead must already be in preparation. The vast Peoul masses, muzzled by terror, were becoming firmly convinced that they were the victims of the purge. Too many of their intellectuals had already come to know the rigors of the camps. The bloody carnival dishonoring the four executed men, two of whom were Peouls, could not be quickly forgotten.

Conversation with Sékou Touré: July 27, 1971

I HAD just finished signing in and, plunged in gloomy thoughts, was waiting for a signal to return to the annex. I gave a start, for, with a smile, Ismaël was offering me the telephone.

"Want to talk to your friend?"[4]

"It can't be!"

[3]*Cortes* denotes magic practices for casting a spell on one's enemies. In fact, underpinning the *cortes* there are often very real and efficacious preparations used to poison or to cause blindness or skin ailments; afflictions thus induced respond to no treatment whatever, apart from traditional local remedies.

[4]President Sékou Touré.

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"Oh, come on. You know him well enough to be sure that tricks are out of the question. Take it."

I took the phone as if it were going to explode in my face. The President? Wanting to talk to me, to *me*, a prisoner?

And yet indeed it was his voice, his voice with the grave, beguiling inflections that mesmerized thousands of listeners, that could work so many "spells."

I felt myself giving way to tears. Despite all the anger, all the hatred that had slowly filled me these last months against Ismaël and his clique, I still loved the man who now was at the other end of the wire. I was still as ready to fight for him as I had been on November 22nd.

"Alata, I wanted to tell you myself that I am pleased with your last depositions. You have helped the cause, and you know you can count on me."

"Mr. President!"

My voice was choked. I cursed my emotionalism, but I was unable to answer. The idea flashed through my mind that I should shout to him that I was innocent. I rejected it. Ismaël was not about to leave my side, he wouldn't let me speak out.

"Mr. Presi—Tenin and my child?"

"What do you mean?" he protested. "Haven't they told you you have a son?"

"What did they call him?"

"Your wife said you would have liked him to have my name."

"After all that's been published, after my statements? Mr. President, how could my child bear your name?"

"None of that has got anything to do with our feelings. You were misled. For as long as you're down there, I promise you I will take care of your family. Do you want to see them?"

"Would it be possible?" I was gripping the phone.

"I'll arrange a meeting with your wife and son. Get hold of yourself, Alata, and trust me."

Still smiling, Ismaël took the phone from my hands and replaced it in its cradle.

I heard the click as if in a dream. I was dumfounded.

"Listening to you, I gathered that I'm due for a good dressing down. He did tell me a long time ago to let you know you had a son. But for tactical reasons, I thought it better to put that off until there would be some recompense. Well, are you pleased?"

It wasn't so much a matter of my being pleased. I was flabbergasted. The President had talked to me. He had abandoned me to my enemies, but he had called me, had announced the birth of my son—even more, had promised that I would see my family and had agreed that my child should bear his name. My friendship for him was such that I had wanted my son to be named after him. Even when I was still free, I used to wonder how he would take my proposal. Wouldn't he think I was toadying? Today, they were forcing me to admit that I had wanted to kill him, that for years I had been secretly betraying him, yet he found it entirely natural that my son should be named after him! It was mad—or was I mad?

Translated by ADRIENNE FOULKE □

Documentation

• We have received a copy of a thick document, issued by the International League for Human Rights and addressed to the United Nations, which brings together large quantities of evidence concerning the torture and brutality practiced by the Sékou Touré regime in Guinea. These documents substantiate the description and analysis in M. Alata's article. The young republic of Guinea has already learned many of the techniques of European totalitarianism.

Copies of this document may be had by writing to the International League for Human Rights, 777 United Nations Plaza, New York, N. Y. 10017. • — Eds.

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H. Brand

Limits to Social Growth or Limits to Privilege?

I will offer here some thoughts about a recently published book by Fred Hirsch, *Social Limits to Growth*.[1] The title seems to place the book in the framework of debates over the physical "limits to growth," but its subject bears no relation to them, except insofar as it shares a pessimistic view about the future of a liberal market economy sustained by "growth" strategies. There is also a difference in analytical method: the limits to physical growth are usually seen as barriers imposed by increasing scarcity of non-renewable resources, and by the threat of environmental catastrophe to capitalist economies. Analytically, such limits lie outside the growth process itself. Hirsch rejects the concerns over the "limits to growth" as misplaced. He argues that such limits do indeed exist, but lie within society, not outside it. They are engendered, not by resource scarcities, but by the contradiction of the expanding availability of material goods and the inherently static supply of what he terms positional goods. "Congestion" results, vitiating affluence. Congestion in turn makes for inflation, for friction between consumption groups, and for social instability. Hirsch advances his argument with great skill. He has created new conceptual approaches. These approaches, however, often fail to explain the phenomena with which he deals, and I will challenge some of them. The book finally comes across as an elaborate apologia for the existing structure of privilege, although in an original way.

The expanding consumption of material goods, Hirsch maintains, changes the conditions of their use to the user's detriment. For expansion of consumption tends to give rise to "social scarcity," a scarcity of social place or position. Such scarcity manifests itself in the congestion of many areas of life in Western societies—in private automobile transportation, recreational and tourist facilities, the incursion of urban ills in the suburbs. It spreads to the well-paid jobs in bureaucratic hierarchies, jobs required to attain and maintain social place. Economic growth in time tests, as it were, society's absorptive capacity for consumption. This capacity does not relate to the acquisition and use of consumer goods as such, but to the *collective* impact of these goods, and to the changes in the social and physical environment that consumption growth generates. For example, when automobiles cease to be a luxury and come to be widely owned, their "positional" value diminishes. Roads become congested, parking restricted, and public transport systems decay. The automobile becomes a necessity. Similarly, the expansion of tourism changes the conditions under which it is experienced, usually decreasing the enjoyments with which it is associated.

Economic growth thus tends to depress the positional advantages expected from rising consumption. Competition for positional goods intensifies, but the supply of such goods is relatively fixed; here, competition "yields

[1]Twentieth Century Fund Study. Cambridge, Mass. and London: Harvard University Press, 1976. 208 pp. $10.

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gains for some only by dint of losses for others." Prices of positional goods rise relative to material goods, screening out those unable to afford them, and helping to relieve congestion. This shifts the competitive struggle to education. An academic degree holds the promise of a good job and advancement in a private or public bureaucracy, thereby seeming to assure a competitive advantage in the struggle for positional goods. But education is also a device for controlling social scarcity. The slot in the bureaucratic hierarchies one eventually fills is largely determined by the pecking order of the universities attended, one's grades, and one's connections.

The idea, widely accepted by economists, that formal education represents a form of accumulated capital—"human capital"—which the individual can optimize, lacks realism:

> [Education] serves as a pure screening device . . . through which employers identify individuals with certain qualities that the educational process tests and certifies but does not itself produce. . . . To the extent that education is a screening device . . . the possibility of general advance is an illusion.

The illusion of general advance is likewise the illusion of affluence. Hirsch's view of economic growth and of the affluent society it creates differs fundamentally from Galbraith's. Hirsch altogether rejects Galbraith's grand theme of private affluence and public squalor. He believes that, even were this dichotomy overcome, the problem of social scarcity, the tension between "aspirations" and "opportunities" would persist. For Galbraith, the content of social struggle lies in the relation between producer, incarnated in corporate power, and consumer, more or less victimized. For Hirsch, it lies in the relation between different consumption groups—on the one hand, the minority that either has the resources or "arrives" early enough to be in position subsequently to reap capital gains or, more generally, to maintain positional advantages; on the other hand, the latecomers who must suffer the deterioration in the social environment caused by the declining availability of positional goods—robbing the material standard of living they have attained of its promise of plenitude.

Better provision of public goods, in Galbraith's sense, would not solve this problem.

> The limitations on the reproduction of the kernel of affluence—place and position—are the more daunting because they are inherent in the social situation; there is no analogue to the technological advance that keeps physical limitations at bay in the material sector. . . . [The] social imbalance which Galbraith correctly diagnosed is grounded more deeply than in an excessive dominance of corporate oligarchies. . . . The flaw in the affluent society lies not in the false values of affluence but in its false promise.

Evidently, affluence promises the attainment of positional goods, but the demand for such goods "seeks the undeliverable. The economic product it evokes then comes out flawed." This is so, Hirsch seems to argue, not only because there are objective limits set to the expansion of the positional sector. In addition, the market acts to internalize public benefits; it privatizes a part of what would otherwise be public domain. The country club substitutes for the public park. The exclusive, heavily guarded and walled apartment complex contributes to the neglect of the city. Private schools impinge on the quality of public schools. Indeed, the market encompasses an ever wider sphere of individual activities that hitherto have lain outside of it.[2] Thereby it imposes what Hirsch calls a commodity fetishism far more insiduous than Marx's conception implies (i.e., a mask for the

[2]As an extreme but nonetheless telling example, Hirsch cites the marriage contract recommended by the magazine *Ms*, "in which mutual obligations of both parties on household duties, sexual tolerance, and a host of other matters are drawn up and specified in . . . explicit detail. . . . Such barter exchanges or contractural commitments focus in effect on the narrow commodity aspect of the relationship—the sexual and other favors to be exchanged—to the neglect of the associated external conditions, such as the spirit in which the exchange is undertaken."

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social relations underlying commodity production). Commercialization, by tending to favor those who have the necessary means, acts to select—hence to limit—access to positional goods. One consequence is the deterioration of public goods as its fiscal basis is eroded.

These are mostly cogent arguments; no summary can do justice to the intelligence and subtlety with which Hirsch advances them. Let us now examine them more closely.

For Hirsch, as noted earlier, the relation between rising material standards and the "stagnant" positional sector translates into a relation between consumption groups. These consumption groups form at one point in his book antagonistic classes (though he eschews the term). Workers, through collective action, seek in time to go beyond the attainment of high material standards of living. They begin to demand equality of economic opportunity. Such demands entail pressure for positional goods; they impinge upon the positional sector, hitherto the preserve of the middle class. This "extension of middle-class objectives" is, however, condemned to futility. For

> the excess demand on middle-class life styles reinforces the underlying inflationary thrust. To the extent that the demands for private consumption underlying the collective wage claims take the form of positional goods in restricted absolute supply—for education that provides better access to the more sought-after jobs, for housing in the more sought-after locations—such demands are doomed to eventual nonfulfillment. . . . [Ever] increasing income in real terms . . . will be found to be needed to secure specific facilities in the positional sector, as the level of general welfare rises. As a result, collective wage demands, besides being induced by inflation through leapfrogging bargaining effects . . . are induced also by "real" growth, as increased competition for products in limited supply raises their relative prices or lowers their quality. Economic success on the conventional reckoning contributes in this way to frustration, tension, and inflation.

The truth of these conclusions hinges on accepting Hirsch's separation of a "material" from a "positional" sector. For analytical purposes, such separation may be admissible. It implies, however, that the historical expansion of the material sector was *not* accompanied by "nonfulfillment" of demands, frustrations, and social instability, which supposedly only now arise from the intensifying competition for positional goods. For example, the struggle for higher wages or a shorter work week has historically been marked by violence and repression (and still remains to be won by large groups of workers). Bourgeois resistance to working-class wage demands during the 19th and much of the 20th century makes one question Hirsch's assertion that, "As long as the collective goals remain confined to acquisitions in the material sector . . . advance can be achieved . . . without disturbing the middle-class growth process. . . ." Moreover, working-class struggles have almost invariably been accompanied by demands for improved working conditions, which, where they had to be met, necessarily abridged managerial prerogatives. Such abridgment must certainly be seen as the loss of a "positional good" for the managerial class. In sum, a historical view of class conflict makes the separation of material and positional goods seem less tenable. Many of today's "material" goods were yesteryear's "positional" goods.

But Hirsch's terminology and his careful circumscription of antagonistic consumption groups, rather than of classes, must be considered as more than mere analytical devices: they obscure the focus of social contention, which is *privilege*—a term that is absent from Hirsch's vocabulary.

Privilege, while not assigned by law or custom in capitalist societies, is no less well established for that. It consists, as Robert Heilbroner has written, in "the right to reap private benefit from the use of the means of production, and the right to utilize the dynamic forces of the marketplace for private enrichment" (*The Limits of Capitalism,* p.71). Social Scarcity of large categories of positional goods relates to this "system of privilege" in

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capitalist society. For example, the capitalization of favorably located land and structures is anchored in the right to privatize benefits that derive from the market demand engendered by economic development. That "latecomers," having to pay the capitalized value of the positional object to "early comers," may be disadvantaged or prevented altogether from buying it does not affect the *nature* of the privilege. So primogeniture worked to the disadvantage of heirs other than the firstborn; nevertheless, it sustained the social power of entire land-owning classes.

The extension of the market to spheres that, for social and economic reasons, should be restricted to collective provisioning (of which Hirsch writes with cogency), may also be viewed as an expansion of the system of privilege. When so viewed, it is almost tautological to say that social scarcity is thereby deliberately fostered. For example, in tourism and the associated hotel and transport facilities, or in the purveyance of scenic land subdivisions, congestion enables entrepreneurs to exploit economies of scale and ensures the profitability of large-scale investment projects. Here, congestion is, in part at least, an outcome of the capitalist mode of producing given services, which sustains the system of privilege.

Like tourism and commercialized recreation, health services furnish still another example of how the rise in consumption has affected the conditions of delivery. The broadened accessibility of health services has transformed them into an industry, run on principles of industrial and managerial engineering and marked by a rationalized division of labor. Health services have come to be controlled increasingly by private operators oriented toward the buildup of capital-intensive technologies, thereby creating an investment base for high volume, economies of scale, and high profitability. Here again, it has been the intrusion of capitalist interests, often supported by public policies and displacing collective provisioning, which has transformed the conditions of consumption. Congestion has been a result, not a cause, of this transformation.

The frequent deterioration of suburban living also can but proximately be traced to congestion. With employment opportunities increasingly located in the suburbs, lower-income persons seek accommodations there. This requires a more social use of land (apartments instead of single-family homes) and raises the tax burden (more schools and other public facilities). Pressures from those seeking access arise from a situation in which locational decisions are made largely on criteria of private advantage, without regard to what happens to city *or* suburb. Here, too, social scarcity results from a system that is intolerant of efforts at collective planning.

Hirsch's view of social scarcity, furthermore, does not square with his keen critique of the treatment of consumption in the national accounts. These accounts recognize but one institutional category of *production*—the enterprise (overwhelmingly the private firm). Households are by definition units of consumption; all purchases of households are for final consumption. However, a substantial proportion of household purchases should be considered, not as final consumption, but as an intermediate cost allocable to production. Simon Kuznets, upon whom Hirsch here relies, has pointed to the changes in social and economic structure that accompany growth—e.g., urbanization, the separation of household and workplace, certain dress and associational requirements—which result in outlays classed as consumption, but which should be assigned to production and should therefore be regarded as intermediate costs, i.e., a *part* of the final value of consumer or investment goods, not as final goods themselves. The national product, as well as the rate of economic growth, would be significantly lower but for the current treatment of consumption outlays in the accounts.

This means that certain groups of consumer goods should be regarded as sustaining the role of the consumer as producer. Such goods then are producer goods incorporating needed producer technologies. Their use is not an individualistic act of consumption

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competing for social place, but a socially induced necessity. For example, in the United States most car ownership is indispensable for the trip to or from work. The phenomenon of too many persons driving at the same time represents a diminution of the automobile's "positional advantage" only from a pure consumption perspective, which at best is only partially relevant. From a producer point of view, road congestion manifests inefficient organization of automobile use, or inadequate road capacity, which at least technically could be remedied. The concept of social scarcity does not apply. The technologies might well be superfluous under some alternative division of labor and spatial distribution of population and employment; but these matters are not at issue here.

Hirsch's concept of social scarcity does not adequately explain congestion; it is also misleading. The struggle between consumption groups that he postulates obscures, on one side, the defense of privilege (or the effort to extend it to new spheres) and, on the other, the pressure for collective provisioning of vital goods and services. His belief that "the vast increase in material productivity has pushed the frontier of mass demand into terrain where there is no longer more for all" and that therefore "one man's gain is often another's loss and that both may lose from the struggle"—all this lacks foundation. It stems largely from a conception of economic growth that equates it to the growth of consumption. The sources of economic growth, however, lie in the creation and diffusion of productive technologies—processes that are unlikely to end soon. They lie in the enormous wave of postwar investment in capital goods and infrastructures, and of vast armaments expenditures. Social scarcity has indeed, perhaps increasingly, accompanied economic growth. But this has not been due to the supposed fixity of positional goods for which competition has sharpened. Its causes must be sought in the capitalist context, which shapes economic growth, and which facilitates the appropriation of its fruits by private and public bureaucracies for purposes alien to humane interests, inimical to the social use of the social product. As against Hirsch, Galbraith is right.

Hirsch's argument provides a subtle rationale against striving for social and economic equality. If the struggle between consumption groups cannot be resolved, because it is over goods whose supply cannot be expanded, and if therefore one man's gain is another's loss, and both may lose in the struggle, then it seems best to safeguard the status quo. This means that the existing system of privilege must not be disturbed. Indeed, Hirsch proposes certain "moral restraints" to contain the struggle for positional goods in civil bounds. His proposals cannot be discussed here; assuredly, they would not impinge on privilege. Moral restraints will not, at any rate, be effective or even acceptable. For the struggle over positional goods brakes economic growth because of the instability engendered by the struggle (e.g., through inflationary wage demands). Hence economic insecurity deepens, contention between classes intensifies, the fabric of civil society is tested. Morality itself becomes an issue.

Hirsch's is also an argument against socialism. The fixity of positional goods, which Hirsch postulates, means that if these goods, being in irremediably scarce supply, were socialized, *everybody*, not just the majority, would be worse off than before. The conditions of consuming positional goods would deteriorate further. Presumably, scenic land sites would become cluttered with country homes, suburban sprawl would worsen, the universities would become overcrowded with aspirants for needless jobs in expanding, mostly useless bureaucracies. This is the logic of what Hirsch says, yet it is in reality but a projection of existing conditions, whose relation to their capitalist context I have outlined. But it is not relevant to the vision of a socialist and communitarian order.

If we bear in mind the writings of the great socialist and anarchist writers, the yearnings

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of much of the European working class, and such luminous experiments as the kibbutz, then we see that at the core of such an order lies a producer democracy, and the planned provision of collective goods (e.g., land and its use, health services, transportation, recreational and learning facilities). A producer democracy would have less need for administering bureaucracies than the corporate state, which requires them in part to maintain its rule. The educational needs of a producer democracy would be quite different therefore, and so would be its educational institutions. Since it would be primarily based on work and community, a producer democracy would be intellectually, socially, and politically more active than the present society. It would therefore give less priority to material consumption. And so the problems Hirsch deals with would subside.

Hirsch does not share this vision. He evidently believes that a form of managed capitalism, modified by the acceptance of moral restraints by contending consumption groups, would ensure social stability within the "limits to social growth." However, the managing of capitalist economies has become the most fundamental problem of the '70s. The threat to social stability from economic *instability* has mounted. In such times, the system of privilege itself comes under pressure, as income flows that sustain it—capital gains, dividends, speculative profits—decrease. "Social security" turns into real scarcity in the face of existing technical means and human capacities that could eliminate it. The issue then is whether to maintain the system of privilege or to abolish it, and with it the social sources of scarcity. So to pose the issue is to foresee difficult political struggles on the road to a socialist and communitarian order. □

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Jiri Hochman

The Death of Drahomir Novak

Jiri Hochman *is not a pseudonym: it is a by-line long coupled with datelines Washington, Peking, and Moscow. The man behind it is a Czech journalist whose satiric reportage helped undermine the Communist facade in Czechoslovakia. During the Dubček revival, Hochman turned the weekly of the Journalists' Union,* Reporter, *into the liveliest voice of awakened freedom. For several years after the Soviet occupation he was alternately hospitalized, unemployed, and imprisoned while his satiric works circulated widely in typed copies and in exile editions. Since his expulsion from Czechoslovakia, he has supported himself by teaching journalism at Ohio State University while continuing to write. His novels and short stories appear regularly in the West European press, are printed by exile publishing houses—and copied by hand in Czechoslovakia as* samizdat.

These samizdat *editions, neatly bound volumes of onion skin pages and typed in twelve copies, are the* readers' *effort. They attest, not that the author wanted to publish, but that* readers *wanted to read, badly enough to pay the price of copying the manuscript by typewriter and risking police harassment. These private typewriters have produced a literary renaissance, including such scholarly volumes as Jan Patočka's* Heretical Essays in the Philosophy of History *(whose distinguished author died recently after a long and grueling interrogation at Secret Police headquarters in Prague), major novels like Pecka's* The Shattering *or Klánský's* Exile*—as well as humor in the tradition of Hašek's* Good Soldier Schweik*—E.K.*

The National Conference of Personnel Department Chiefs of County Distribution Centers took place that year at the beginning of April at the tried conference site on the shores of Lake Slapy.

From Bohemia and Moravia came 7 chiefs, 3 from Slovakia, which makes a total of 15, for one must not forget the representatives of ministries, and in particular those of the Party, thanks to whose tireless efforts, understanding and support, it was possible etc., etc., etc.

Comrade Bohumir Novak, Chief of the Personnel Department of the County Distribution Center of Southern Moravia was assigned room number 13, but as a Marxist he made no complaint. Not until after supper, when he went to his room to get an Alka Seltzer did he discover that someone had rummaged through his suitcase. However, at night he took some phenobarbital so that he slept soundly. In the morning he found that somebody had even ransacked his pockets. Everything had been turned upside down, the cigarette lighter was in his pants, the revolver in his sock, and the sock in his briefcase. However, as an experienced cop he kept his cool.

Pretending to go for an early morning walk, he hid under an overturned rowboat and waited. Lo and behold—what did he see! Comrade Jaromir Novak, Chief of the Personnel Department of the West Bohemian County Distribution Center, was coming, sneaking cautiously down the path behind him.

What a gas, thought comrade Bohumir Novak, hidden under the rowboat. While I should be unobtrusively watching you, brother, you come creeping up behind me! What a way to organize things!

However, comrade Bohumir Novak was mistaken.

Comrade Jaromir Novak was not following him, but rather his Slovak comrade Ludovit Novak,

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Chief of the Personnel Department of the County Distribution Center of the West Slovakian County, who had proceeded down that same trail already ten minutes earlier, and since comrade Ludovit Novak had run out clad merely in his pajamas, he had a head start.

Comrade Bohumir Novak, still hidden under the upside-down rowboat, obviously knew nothing about comrade Ludovit Novak, and therefore his suspicion that comrade Jaromir Novak was following him and not comrade Ludovit Novak, of whom he had not caught a glimpse, was rather well founded.

Comrade Bohumir Novak was just about to scramble out from under his rowboat, when at that point also comrade Lubomir Novak, Chief of the Personnel Department of the County Distribution Center of the Central Bohemian County appeared on the trail, gazing around with circumspection. As a cousin of the County Party Secretary he had hanging around his neck long-range field glasses from the German Democratic Republic, and since he was sneaking closely along the rowboat, he nearly trod upon comrade Bohumir Novak's hand.

Well, well!—said comrade Bohumir Novak to himself, snatching away his hand just in time—how come comrade Lubomir Novak follows comrade Jaromir Novak, when he ought to be rightly watching comrade Zvonimir Novak, Chief of the Personnel Department of the County Distribution Center of Usti on the Elbe?

In that he was right. Comrade Lubomir Novak was indeed supposed to watch comrade Zvonimir Novak, however, he had lost the latter overnight, and when he didn't find him even in waitress Fanny's bed he finally sallied forth into the field in order to solve the mystery.

Behind comrade Lubomir Novak there was a gap of which comrade Bohumir Novak swiftly took advantage in order to crawl out from under the rowboat and set out in a northwesterly direction on the heels of comrade Lubomir Novak, however with the intent of overtaking him by means of a detour and thus getting hold of comrade Jaromir Novak who had been assigned to him, not suspecting, however, that the latter had been assigned comrade Ludovit Novak of West Slovakia, who, in turn, was in front.

In the meanwhile, moreover, out on the trace ran also Slovak comrade Vasil Novak, Chief of the Personnel Department of the County Distribution Center of the East Slovakian County, who was searching for comrade Lubomir Novak, but seeing the overturned rowboat, as a former partisan, he swiftly hid beneath it, for he heard a dull crash, the echo of the fall of comrade Vlastimil Novak who had slipped while hurrying after his Slovak comrade Vasil Novak. For the purpose of better orientation it must be added that comrade Vlastimil Novak as Chief of the Personnel Department of the County Distribution Center of the East Bohemian County did not have the proper footwear for sports activity in the field.

Thus it happened that comrade Vlastimil Novak got ahead of comrade Vasil Novak, even though it had been his original intention to get behind him, and on the other hand comrade Vasil Novak had between himself and comrade Lubomir Novak already comrade Bohumir Novak, who had been under the rowboat previously, in addition to which comrade Kazimir Nowak from the North Moravian County had run into his path, who in turn was investigating the cause of the matutinal absence of comrade Vlastimil Novak, and since comrade Kazimir Nowak was younger and in excellent condition, he jumped over the rowboat including comrade Vasil Novak, whereby the search was further tangled up.

But while leaping over the rowboat, comrade Kazimir Nowak landed on the stern of the craft, which slid off the boatrack and settled on the grass, concealing thus the surrounding area from comrade Vasil Novak's view, as well as preventing the latter from crawling out in a hurry, so that comrade Svatomir Novak, Chief of the Personnel Department of the County Distribution Center of the South Bohemian County, who hastened to investigate the strange behavior of comrade Kazimir Nowak ran by, unheard and unnoticed by comrade Vasil Novak.

At this moment comrade Zvonimir Novak (Chief of the Personnel Department of the County Distribution Center of the North Bohemian County) woke up, indeed not in waitress Fanny's bed, where comrade Lubomir Novak had looked for him, but rather in Mr. Razl's, the cook's, where he would not have been sought by anyone. And Zvonimir Novak briskly ran out in his red shorts in order to observe inconspicuously, under the pretense of jogging, the doings of comrade Svatomir Novak who had been assigned to him as Chief from Budejice within the framework of regionalism.

COMRADE Drahomir Novak who as representative of the Ministry of Distribution had been assigned

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the task of keeping watch over everybody was sitting meanwhile vigilantly in an abandoned ice cream parlor and nervously observed that he was still missing comrade Mojmir Novak, Chief of the Personnel Department of the County Distribution Center of the Central National Committee in Prague, who was supposed to be in the field long ago, properly then between comrade Vasil Novak and comrade Vlastimil Novak. However, even if he should have run out now, comrade Mojmir Novak would have had difficulties finding his right place at this point, due to the fact that his comrade Vasil Novak was lying under the rowboat, while comrade Vlastimil Novak whom he should have had behind himself would by now be separated from him additionally by comrade Kazimir Nowak, not to mention comrade Lubomir Novak who at this moment, resting in the bushes, remained unnoticed and was finally overtaken by all with the exception of comrade Vasil Novak who was imprisoned under the rowboat, and comrade Drahomir Novak who was sitting in the ice cream parlor, and finally, of course, with the exception of himself.

At 7:45 comrade Drahomir Novak was still sitting, alive and well, in the abandoned ice cream parlor and although he had an urge, he did not leave his advantageous post. He, therefore, could observe comrade Ludovit Novak who was returning in his pajamas while he, too, searched in vain in woods and ravines for comrade Mojmir Novak, though he himself had been caught up with and was being followed by comrade Kazimir Nowak who, however, mistakenly believed him to be comrade Vlastimil Novak, because they wore similar pajamas.

Comrade Vlastimil Novak, although he should have been followed by comrade Kazimir Nowak, returned finally not followed by anybody, since comrade Vasil Novak whom he was seeking was still imprisoned under the rowboat, and comrade Kazimir Nowak who was seeking him was already back at home base, confused by the color of comrade Ludovit Novak's pajamas.

Comrade Bohumir Novak, who finally got behind comrade Jaromir Novak, was forced to join comrade Lubomir Novak who had never caught up with his comrade Ludovit Novak, and both, therefore, speedily followed comrade Svatomir Novak who himself, however, strode in the footsteps of comrade Zvonimir Novak, unable to prevent an unknown old woman who was watching her only goat grazing on the fallow from getting between himself and comrade Zvonimir Novak, still clad in his red shorts.

The aforesaid comrade Svatomir Novak, apparently angered by these predicaments, had the unfortunate idea of climbing up a mighty walnut tree spreading its branches above the ice cream parlor, which tree, then, crashed with him at 8:10 upon the deserted ice cream parlor and together with the latter on comrade Drahomir Novak finding himself still inside it.

Present at the funeral of comrade Drahomir Novak were all the participants of the unlucky National Conference at Slapy, and that including comrade Mojmir Novak. The secret of the latter's nonparticipation on the trace of that fatal morning comrade Drahomir Novak had taken with him on his final voyage.

The March of the Fallen Revolutionaries resounded majestically through space, and everyone was tearful, most of all the cook, Mr. Razl.

(1969)

— *Translated by* MARKETA FREUNDOVA □

Connor Cruise O'Brien

On Violence and Terror

I have recently been reading a number of academic studies on this subject and related themes—terrorism, guerrilla war, vigilantism, etc., and I have been struck by the clinical detachment of the tone of several of these studies. The writers appear to take a stand of something like neutrality between a democratic state and its armed internal enemies. It would be inappropriate on my part to affect such a detachment. I am committed, both by personal conviction and by responsibilities, which I share, to the concept that armed conspiracies against a democratic state threaten us with a reversion to barbarism, and that the democratic state has the duty of defending civilization against

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these conspiracies by all means short of those that would themselves involve a descent into barbarism.

I am deliberately confining myself to the consideration of political violence under democratic conditions because I believe this is the aspect of the matter that most concerns both you and me. I also think it rather pointless to discuss whether people living, say, under a military dictatorship—which is in itself a form of armed conspiracy—should or should not set up another armed conspiracy in order to overthrow the ruling one. Everything there would depend on one's guess as to the human costs involved and as to the likelihood of the new conspiracy being an improvement on the old one. The defense of democracy is another matter and permits, I think, of firmer judgment.

When I speak of the defense of democracy, I am not of course in any way defending those colonial wars that have been waged by democracies in conditions where democracy is for home consumption, not for export.

The Vietnam War, for example, was a negation not an assertion of democratic values. But even while that war continued, the existence of democracy in America itself continued to be of positive value and made possible the protest movement against the war, which eventually helped to end it.

I would agree, of course, that the defense of the democratic state against terrorists involves a certain kind of political violence—violence, that is to say, used in defense of a political system against people attempting to substitute for that, by violence, another system. I would prefer myself to follow the old usage whereby violence used by the state is described as force, and the more pejorative term reserved for the activities of the enemies of the state. But I am not inclined to quibble about the word and I agree that gunshot remains gunshot with whatever abstraction it may be covered.

The complete pacifist must of course reject the violence of the state, as well as that of its enemies, external and internal. This is a religious position: it is also an anarchist position. This would be wholly admirable if human beings had reached a stage where they could live in peace together without imposed restraints. This is not now the case nor does it seem at all likely to be attained even in the next 100 years. In these conditions the disarming of the state would lead to its dissolution, to the distribution of power among groups prepared to use violence and probably to external intervention—all of which would entail greater violence than follows from the normal retention of the law-enforcing apparatus of the state. A convinced religious pacifist would be prepared to accept even these consequences, but ordinary people would not.

It is true, of course, that even democratic and welfare states and their legal structures maintain and defend institutions and practices that involve very substantial inequalities both of rewards and opportunities. Since the state is prepared to defend these inequalities by force if necessary, the whole system is often characterized as one of institutionalized violence. As a description, this has a certain limited validity. Institutionalized violence is a necessary part of *every* organized state, since without its availability any state would disintegrate. But those who make most use of the term tend to ignore the fact that the institutionalization of violence within a democratic system is the most responsible way available to us for containing violence. Democratic institutions can be altered by nonviolent means; the use of violence by the democratic state is subject to scrutiny and criticism, and abuses can be punished and corrected. None of this works perfectly, but it works to some extent, and no such restrictions at all apply to other uses of violence, whether by nondemocratic states or by terrorist organizations.

Those who make most use of the term "institutionalized violence" often seem to suggest both that its existence justifies noninstitutional violence—that is, terrorism—and that the violence of the terrorist is calculated to bring about conditions in which institutionalized violence no longer exists. The career of Joseph Stalin from the early bank robberies in Baku to the later Lordship of Gulag Archipelago might seem to cast some doubt on this hypothesis. If people prepared to use violence to get their way actually *do* get their way, there is absolutely no reason to suppose that they will not be prepared to go on using violence to see that they go on getting their way. Thus, if the democratic state is overthrown, the institutionalized violence will continue: what will have disappeared will be the democratic system and its safeguards.

II

IN SOME left-wing commentary on current forms of terrorism we can see a romantic presumption in favor of the terrorist. Since he is prepared to risk his own life, as well as to take the lives of others, he is taken to be exceptionally unselfish, setting his

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cause above his own personal interests. This presumption tends in turn to generate vaguely favorable notions about the merits of the cause in question, but in fact the presumption itself is unwarranted. All we know with certainty about the terrorist is what he does and what he says. What he does is kill people, what he says is that he kills to attain certain political ends, but there is no reason why we should take what he says on trust. He may be working for some political end, or he may be working under a political flag for essentially personal ends. The life of a terrorist, risky as it is, has its rewards. These include power—the power that grows out of the barrel of a gun—a certain kind of glamour and prestige, money, and freedom from normal routines and constraints. For some personalities this combination may be attractive enough to make them want to continue their terrorist activity even if they know their ostensible political objectives to be unattainable. But of course if these objectives are really thought of as attainable, there is also an attractive *future* role for the terrorist, as in the case of Stalin.

These imputed motivations are largely speculative but certainly no more speculative, and I think considerably more probable, than the notion that terrorists are exceptionally unselfish or, to use a favorite word of their admirers, "dedicated." Dedicated to what?

The only unusual thing we know with certainty about the terrorist—the thing that marks him out from other people—is his unusual propensity to frighten, hurt, and kill people. This in itself is no guarantee of selflessness: some people *like* killing, frightening, and hurting people, and also like the other more or less tangible rewards that derive from the capacity to frighten, hurt, and kill.

I would therefore argue that presumptions in favor of the terrorist are superfluous and that it is more reasonable to look at him, as most people do, as a menace to society, which it is important to suppress. The romantic concept of the terrorist, besides being unjustified, is an obstacle to his suppression and that is why it is important to challenge this concept.

III

IT IS the nature of democracy and in part a source of its strength that it allows far freer range to its enemies than does any other system of government. The terrorist naturally takes full advantage of this and in particular derives sustenance from his peculiar relation to the media. Violence is news: the greater the atrocity the greater the publicity. For terrorists working in these conditions the publicity is an essential part of the game. To many, it is intensely enjoyable for its own sake but it also serves practical purposes. It helps with fund-raising; the Provisional IRA campaign could probably not have lasted this long without the money that the publicizing of its exploits has drawn from North America. The publicity also both attracts recruits and tends to spread in the community generally an atmosphere of fear, which may often be helpful to terrorist operations.

The security forces, the police with the army in reserve, are of course in the frontline in the struggle against antidemocratic terrorism. Victory in that struggle depends on the degree to which the society at large sees the terrorist clearly as the enemy, and on the number of people who are prepared to run at least some degree of risk to combat terrorism. These factors vary in different conditions. In my own country, Ireland, for example, a prevalent romantic interpretation of history long favored recruitment for the IRA. To challenge that interpretation of history was therefore a significant part of the struggle against the IRA, and some progress has been made in that respect.

The responsibility of the media in this area is an extremely complex subject. On the one hand, it is quite certain that the terrorists do consciously use the freedoms of the media in their attempt to destroy the type of state that alone makes those freedoms possible. At the same time it has been claimed, by a Brazilian theorist of terrorism, that one of the objects of the terrorist is to force the democratic state itself to curb these and other freedoms and make itself so unattractive that the cause favored by the terrorist eventually seems preferable. The Brazilian theory is, I think, pushed to fanciful lengths, but the problem of having to defend democracy by limiting some of its freedoms is a real one. To ask the media for voluntary restraint is probably futile. The freedom of the press includes the freedom to be sensational, and in a market economy sensational treatment of violence always finds ready buyers. It is probably, though not certainly, better to live with this than to attempt to curb it, except in the area of broadcasting where a degree of state regulation is necessarily involved.

IV

THE BEST WAY for a democracy to deal with what is called political violence is to set aside its supposedly political character and concentrate on its criminal aspect as an armed conspiracy. This

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implies a stolid refusal to make any deal with the conspirators, to concede any of their demands, or to have any contact with them at all, other than those contacts that may be necessary for their apprehension and suppression and the protection of those whom they threaten. It may be argued that the foundation of the Irish state, of whose government I am a member, provides a notable example to the contrary effect, since that state may be said to have been founded through a deal with IRA terrorists. This argument ignores the fact that the men with whom Lloyd George negotiated in 1921 had a democratic mandate from a great majority of the population of the new state—not a mandate for violence but a mandate to negotiate.

No group of terrorists at present operating in these islands has any democratic mandate at all. Any deal with any of them would be simple capitulation to the naked violence of small unrepresentative groups. In these conditions well-meaning mediators should be discouraged; mediation brings the terrorist prestige and encouragement, relief from pressure, and time to regroup; for the democratic state—unless it is prepared to abdicate altogether—it can bring only a lull followed by a savage resumption of terror. There is ultimately no way of beating the terrorist except by convincing him, and above all his friends and financial supporters, that he has no chance at all of getting his own way. This may take a long time, and may involve more suffering and death, but it can and must be done to avoid the far worse consequences that follow if a democracy flinches before the terrorist threat. □

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Peter M. Connolly

The Early Fifties: Another Look

Different parts of the past are "alive" at different moments in the present. We are now witnessing an extraordinary upsurge of interest in the period that might be said to have begun with the proclamation of the Truman Doctrine in 1947 and ended with the Senate condemnation of McCarthy in 1954, which I shall refer to as the early '50s. It is a sign of the times that Carl Bernstein, upon resigning from the *Washington Post,* forswore the raking of present-day muck and announced an intention to write about the blacklist. On the left, the renewed debate over the Truman loyalty program, HUAC, the blacklists, the Hiss case, the Rosenbergs, McCarthy, and the other obsessions of that time have revealed the existence of two distinct attitudes regarding the early '50s, which can roughly be characterized as revisionist and anti-Communist liberal.

The revisionist attitude can be schematically but not unfairly represented as follows: The early '50s constitute a tragic era. The radicals, who had exercised a leavening influence in the labor

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movement, the arts, and other "advanced" sectors of American politics, were driven to the periphery of American life. Thousands of blameless lives were ruined. The permanent war economy was institutionalized, with evil consequences at home and abroad. The Korean War, the arms race, and the Vietnam War all grew out of the anti-Communist mania of this period, a mania largely generated by the misrepresentations of Russian postwar aims made by the Cold War liberals who are the main villains of the era. The two most logical outgrowths of the policies of Truman and Acheson are the twin disasters of Vietnam and Watergate, the one representing the culmination of Cold War paranoia about Communism and the other the fulfillment of the potential for power abuse inherent in the "national security state."

The unreconstructed anti-Communist liberal position has been forcefully stated in Nathan Glazer's "An Answer to Lillian Hellman" (*Commentary,* June 1976) and Hilton Kramer's "The Blacklist and the Cold War" (*New York Times,* October 3, 1976). These men argue that American postwar resistance to Soviet totalitarianism was morally warranted. They and like-minded liberals believe that Americans who sympathized with Soviet Communism were in league with atrocity and mired in intellectual bad faith. While donning the libertarian mantle at home, they assert, Communist and fellow-traveling intellectuals offered "sophisticated" explanations for the absence of liberty abroad.

Anti-Communist liberals remain intensely conscious of the issue of how a free society should respond to those seen as using democratic means to effect undemocratic ends. They accept Sidney Hook's formulation that Communists and fellow-travelers were not socially desirable "heretics" but malevolent "conspirators" in the service of a hostile foreign power.

To them, it is still an article of faith that if one became a "knowing" member of the Communist party one's beliefs and actions became a proper object of governmental concern. Hilton Kramer draws a sharp distinction between justified sympathy for the "innocent" people who were "smeared and even destroyed by false accusations" and the Communists who "denied their true commitments and beliefs and thereby created an atmosphere of havoc and hazard for the truly innocent." To have been a Communist is to have been guilty of something. It is never clear what. Liberal anti-Communists appear to resent the idea of a Communist or fellow-traveler as *victim* and have no patience with those who represent them artistically as such. As to what actually happened to American Communists and alleged fellow-travelers they are silent or regard the issue as minor.

Liberal anti-Communists now profess distaste for the congressional inquisitors and loyalty vigilantes of the early '50s. Toward victimizers and victimized, they adopt a "plague on both your houses" stance. At present, this position generally leads to a grudging willingness to defend what occurred, at least as regards those adjudged not to be "innocent."

I WOULD LIKE to sketch out an alternative position, one that might commend itself to those on the left who find themselves in neither camp.

Basic to this position is the belief that what happened to the American Communists and those within the party's orbit was wrong. What many liberal anti-Communists often forgot during the early '50s and evidently still cannot understand is that American citizens have as much right to be Communists as they have to be born-again Baptists.

The overwhelming majority of those Americans who were persecuted ruthlessly by the government and by amateur witch-hunters during the McCarthy era never spied for the Soviet Union, never made bombs, plotted assassinations, or did anything else violent or legitimately denominated illegal. If any of these things were done, then it was just to punish those responsible in the normal course of the criminal law. (Though there too the climate of hysteria took its toll. Assuming, for the sake of argument, the Rosenbergs' guilt, would anyone today defend the death sentence passed on them or agree with President Eisenhower and Judge Kaufman that they bore the main responsibility for the Korean War?) Gus Hall may well have cherished dreams of being the American Ulbricht, but the government never proved anything against him and his fellow Smith Act defendants other than that they had a high opinion of the works of Lenin.

It must constantly be kept in focus that during the early '50s people were made to suffer for thinking thoughts and saying words that were unpopular. Or are there any anti-Communist liberals still prepared to contend that the American Communist party and those it influenced posed any kind of real "threat," justifying obsessive governmental and private attention, to the most powerful nation on earth? To argue that those who

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were victimized thought foolish thoughts, engaged in unfair polemics, or participated in power struggles in left-wing organizations and labor unions, and thereby to imply that this in some measure counterbalances the enormity of what was done to them, is truly to experience a failure of the historical imagination.

Having said and emphasized this, one can then say that at least part of the American left failed to recognize and condemn the evils of Stalinism, and that this failure had disastrous consequences. Irving Howe has written of Lillian Hellman's contention that "whatever our mistakes, I do not believe that we did our country any harm":

> Dear Lillian Hellman, you could not be more mistaken! Those who supported Stalinism and its political enterprises, either here or abroad, helped befoul the cultural atmosphere, helped bring totalitarian methods into trade unions, helped destroy whatever possibilities there might have been for the resurgence of serious radicalism in America. Isn't that harm enough?

I would add one other point to Howe's catalogue of disastrous results. When the militant antiwar movement arose in justified horror at U.S. policy in Indochina, it had no widespread tradition of radical antitotalitarianism to rely on in formulating its attitude toward Communism. There duly emerged an updated version of fellow-traveling in that movement, with sentimental views of North Vietnam, Cuba, etc., replacing the former false picture of the Soviet Union. This authoritarian tinge in various elements of the antiwar movement helped to unite most Americans in hostility to it and thus to prolong the unconscionable American intervention in Vietnam.

However intensely one may believe that American Communism was a moral and intellectual disaster, it must be acknowledged that history presents some American Communists of the early '50s as martyrs to their beliefs. In retrospect, their absolute right to their opinions must be zealously defended by anyone who cares about human rights and does not wish to reserve his compassion for those with whom he identifies. □

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Peter Clecak

Culture and Politics in the Sixties

GATES OF EDEN: AMERICAN CULTURE IN THE SIXTIES, by Morris Dickstein.
New York: Basic Books. 300 pp. $11.95

A brief advertisement for "A New Magazine for the 70s" features a cropped photograph of a crowd of young people. Superimposed on this icon is the question, "What's Left of the '60s?" The answer: "MOTHER JONES, Finally. . . . A Magazine for the Rest of Us," for the veterans of "the generation that got back in touch with our world, in the most basic ways." The copywriter then rehearses a familiar litany of achievements: "We rediscovered ourselves. Music opened us up, and took off. The Beatles. The Stones. Dylan. We found our own literature, with a tough cosmic, comic vision. . . . *Catch 22. Slaughterhouse Five. Cuckoo's Nest.* We identified with a handful of writers. Pynchon. Grass. Barthelme. Vonnegut. Barth." The political dimension follows: "We put our stamp upon the world by fighting against Viet Nam, by working in the Peace Corps. And by confronting racism, sexism and militarism." With the promise of a lively exploration of current alternatives, the reader is urged to subscribe: "After all, there's no sense in living the '70s alone."

Here, in a revealing caricature, are the chief elements of a new revisionism, a vague centering of postwar American history in the succession of decades and generations: the '60s form the centerpiece, a hopeful moment of personal, cultural, and political liberation between the sterile, repressive '50s and the constricted, quiescent '70s. In this nostalgic view, political currents virtually disappear into cultural ones: the '50s are remembered as a time of almost cowardly personal withdrawal from all public spheres; the '60s as a time of youthful romantic heroism. The '70s emerge as a period of waiting, a decade that hasn't happened: the watchword is survival.

The political and literary fathers—Daniel Bell, Seymour Martin Lipset, Lewis Feuer, Nathan Glazer, Saul Bellow, Philip Rahv, and Irving Howe—wrote the opening round of generally harsh assessments of the '60s. Now the dispersed survivors of the heroic generation, having failed to make history conform to their largest desires, begin to write it in the form of memoirs, novels, and more or less formal accounts. Frequently they search for their distinctive voices within the rich, nostalgic vein of revisionist sentiment that provides imaginative unity to their basic sense of the '60s, and their reading of the surrounding decades.

Morris Dickstein's *Gates of Eden,* which may be read as a critical gloss on the *Mother Jones* blurb, is the most ambitious cultural formulation of the revisionist outlook I know of. Dickstein remains strongly attracted to this reading of postwar American experience, but with a happy complication: born a moment too soon, in 1940, he experienced the '60s not as an innocent but as a man with a divided consciousness, an elder brother caught between intellectual fathers and rebellious children. Discovering the larger intellectual world of New York after a childhood spent in orthodox Jewish surroundings, Dickstein entered Columbia in 1957, where he came under the spell of Lionel Trilling: "What probably has marked me more than anything," he observes, "was that I came to consciousness between the generations; my formative experiences bridged both the fifties and the sixties, and I never felt wholly comfortable in either

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world, though both were passionately important to me in their turn."

A compound of autobiography and cultural history, *Gates of Eden* attempts to trace the main patterns of "sensibility, attitude and awareness" that define American culture of the '50s and '60s. Locating the genuinely important changes in the sensibilities of individuals rather than in the transformation of institutions, Dickstein fashions his eccentric cultural history largely out of literary materials on the supposition that particular texts, carefully selected and skillfully analyzed, "can shed light on the larger Text," which is to say, on the whole culture.

Going beyond mere celebration of the '60s as a time of liberation from the aesthetic, moral, political, and social detritus of the past, Dickstein attempts to bring the revisionist view to critical life by subdividing the postwar decades and pursuing a balanced appraisal of the literature and social criticism of each period. Thus, for example, the '50s are not recast simply as an era of repression and cultural conformity but also as a time of ferment: in the latter half of the decade, Dickstein contends, shoots of the new sensibility appear in the "prophetic" writings of such figures as Norman Mailer, Allen Ginsberg, C. Wright Mills, Norman O. Brown, Herbert Marcuse, Richard Chase, and Paul Goodman. Similarly, the '60s are carved into three cultural-political slices—an early phase (the hopeful Kennedy-Johnson years); a middle or "high" phase (1965-68, when "dissent" graduated to "resistance"), and a late, "Weatherman" phase, when everything fell apart. Dickstein illustrates the paths of the new sensibility against the background of the '50s through fleeting analyses of the fiction of Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud, Joseph Heller, Kurt Vonnegut, and Thomas Pynchon, and through chapters on the New Journalism (Tom Wolfe, Mailer again), Black writers (from Richard Wright to Eldridge Cleaver), the "Age of Rock," and the recent experimental fiction of Donald Barthelme and Rudolph Wurlitzer.

There is much to admire in this bold undertaking. Dickstein works on a broad canvas, ordering a wealth of detail into a clear image of the polarities of recent American culture. Despite occasional lapses, he writes decently. The autobiographical cast of the book, though ultimately ill-conceived as I shall argue in a moment, gives it a tone of authenticity that is enhanced by the author's critical sense. This critical side of Dickstein's sensibility tempers his enthusiasm for the spontaneity of the '60s—the free-wheeling, experimental spirit, the political utopianism, the attempts to move literary modernism from the closets of the academy into "the streets," as Trilling put it. And it creates the surface impression of a balanced, judicious view. There is considerable rhetorical charm, after all, in using the critical weapons of the literary and political fathers to vindicate the sensibilities, and by implication the actions, of the sons and daughters. Although not without substance, this generally sanguine impression strikes me as seriously misleading. Since *Gates of Eden* is apt to become an influential text, I should like to concentrate my remarks on its defects.

THE PROJECT of creating cultural history from an analysis of "key" texts may yield satisfying results. But the method clearly is hazardous. Any selection of texts is subjective. Inferences about a culture as diverse as ours tend to be highly speculative and usually inflated. More often than not, dubious general claims turn out to depend upon a circular confusion of evidence: such claims conform to some dominant view of a period, qualifying, revising, and confirming it, but staying within its imaginative boundaries. Aware of these limitations, Dickstein nevertheless is given to reckless exuberance. Consider, as an example, his summary statement concerning the '50s, which are characterized as on balance a "ruminative, private, morally austere and self-conscious, apolitical" time: "the literature and politics of the period are one," Dickstein asserts. "There is no special 'key' to the sensibility of the age: almost anything works if we turn it right and press it hard. But the Jewish novel works especially well."

Perhaps, but the reader must be prepared to accept Dickstein's revisionist perspective and his misguided Hegelian premise of cultural coherence: otherwise the inferences about Jewish guilt and expiation extracted from compressed readings of Malamud and Bellow do not work. Since, however, this revisionist outlook is mediated through Dickstein's recollected personal experience rather than being grounded in a developed theoretical formulation, we should first examine the character and functions of the autobiographical elements. Two instances should do here. On being ignored by Paul Goodman at a seminar in the early '60s, Dickstein admits that his "bright-young-man's ego was bruised. . . . Later when . . . [Goodman] published his journal *Five Years* to show the world that he was not a good

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man but one driven and debased by sexual hungers and humiliations, I was able to guess at what happened: I simply hadn't turned him on." Here is Dickstein on education at occupied Columbia:

> What the policeman failed to understand was the different forms education can take. . . . During the entire week when many on the faculty [among them, Dickstein] were working to conciliate the situation and keep the police from being called, what was going on was nonstop education. The students were completely existential revolutionaries, learning the whole gamut of political strategies and possibilities as they went along.

Such passages are not merely embarrassing. They reveal a deep confusion in Dickstein's basic attitude toward recent American culture and politics, which I think originates in a blurring of the idea of autobiography with the *mere* subjectivism of the '60s that he so obviously admires. This subjective impulse may liberate individuals from the oppressive claims of history, tradition, and society, exempting them from disciplined moral, aesthetic, and political canons of taste and judgment. It also may liberate individuals from the just claims of the past, binding them to an essentially illiberal view of culture and politics, and to a trivial view of self. The critical component of Dickstein's sensibility happily prevents him from indulging in unrestrained admiration for his subject throughout the book, prompting him to acknowledge in the epilogue that even if liberation yields a measure of free space, the exercise of freedom "sometimes . . . involves the submission to discipline. . . ." And discipline is precisely what Dickstein—or anyone else who relies on the method of inferring cultural patterns from a critical discussion of literary texts—needs. Had he followed his own counsel, Dickstein might have registered greater success in keeping the "autobiographical impulse under control" by sticking to the texts: for this sort of critical performance itself simultaneously reveals *and controls* the author's voice.

Dickstein's mannerist consciousness thus creates a sanitized and curiously aloof view of the '60s: the most distasteful political and cultural forms and consequences of radical individualism are glazed over, as in the treatment of Mailer's notes on violence in "The White Negro." (On first reading, Dickstein recalls being enthralled by the prospect of better orgasms "while the qualified homage to violence a few lines earlier . . . made no such impact. I had no need of it, and took no notice.") The author's nostalgic attachment to canons of criticism enables him to have everything both ways. Indeed, the split consciousness allows Dickstein to have everything *his* way: he represents himself as the hero of his own cultural history. One writer after another is introduced, celebrated as a prophet or examplar of the new sensibility, and then demolished in at most a few pages. Aided by hindsight and numerous secondary sources (some of them cited, others not), Dickstein thus achieves only a mere balance, a deceptive surface that conceals a flawed vision of postwar American culture and politics.

Dickstein's autobiographical self-indulgence—his misunderstanding of the demands of the genre—accounts also for his eccentric vision of America: *Gates of Eden* concerns itself with some very important strains of American culture of the '50s and '60s, not with the whole of it, or even a part that stands for the whole, as the subtitle of the book promises. Dickstein, however, seems at ease with what he delivers, noting in the preface that he has "slighted cultural phenomena" for which he feels "little affinity, as well as others that were more conservative than innovative, and therefore tell us little about cultural change." However suitable for an examination of other intellectuals who share his parochialisms, Dickstein's attitude blinds him to the larger currents in American society and culture, not to mention their nuances: the conflicts of the '60s, he writes, "unmasked another Old Regime whose convenient symbol was Eisenhower, whose substance was the increasingly decayed and irrelevant traditions of rural or small-town America. . . ." More than a pardonable shorthand, such pretension and insensitivity inform the imaginative center of the book, predisposing Dickstein to denigrate the '50s, celebrate the '60s, and lament much of the '70s.

A DIVIDED CONSCIOUSNESS permits Dickstein a final evasion. Distancing his romantic subject through a classic, critical lens, he avoids a sustained interrogation of the revisionist paradigm. Familiar sequences are noticed, but no theoretical connections emerge. The two most serious lapses occur in the sketchy treatment of the sensibility of the New Left and in the discussions of the cultural modernism of the '60s. Recalling the ethos of the New Left in the prologue, Dickstein speaks of

> the hopeful and affecting vision that animated the sixties at its best, before the travesty of

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> Manson and Altamont, the Weathermen and the SLA. Call it Romantic socialism: the Romantic vision of the redemption of the self, the libertarian socialist dream of a community of redeemed selves in the real world.

Later, in the Columbia uprising, he catches a "glimpse of what education can become when linked to practice, at the very moment when the enthusiasm of the New Left was about to dissolve into the mindless dogmatism and violence of the Weathermen." Unable to connect the early hopes of the New Left with its Weatherman phase, Dickstein can only suggest lamely that the causes lay in its own frustrations, "its inability to affect policy, to elect candidates, or even to preserve its own integrity in the face of failure and backlash."

But this will not do: the intensity of the frustrations and their distinctive shapes require explanation. Dickstein lapses into silence on this matter. He provides no serious theoretical treatment of the nature of the political economy of American capitalism, which knits together the postwar decades, and no extended account of discontinuities in the economy, education, and the occupational structure. Nor is there any mention of the class origins and characteristics of the '60s generation. However unfashionable these categories may seem just now, they need to be dealt with in any consideration of the frustrations of the New Left—especially its more or less rapid deliquescence into dogmatism and violence.

Dickstein also ignores one important facet of the explanation by failing to identify a major source of the frustrated hopes in the New Left's commitment to *enacting* a peculiar vision of Eden—a romantic communism (which he cavalierly misdefines as "socialism"). Those who adopt the idea of a free-wheeling radical individualism in hopes of achieving a voluntary communist community of abundance prepare the way for multiple disasters. This vague vision yields several kinds of political failure: impotence in relation to the larger society, accompanied by the withdrawal of disaffected minorities into small, antidemocratic sects, and/or dissolution of temporary communities into mere anarchy. Because it is politically impossible to bring off, a voluntary community of fully realized equals turns out to be a cruel illusion. Without this social matrix, the personal dimensions of the vision turn sour. Insofar as it ignores the importance of moral economy, this idea of romantic communism produces personality disorientation, loneliness, and spiritual hunger rather than a full disclosure of individual powers. As a perspective on culture, the romantic vision may inspire brilliant texts, but it also yields less sanguine results to the extent that it infects the larger Text. The audience upon which a rich culture depends loses its bearings as standards of excellence sag, disciplined learning falls into disfavor, and the delicate webs of reason, history, and tradition begin to come apart. Genuine experiment degenerates into mere novelty, and cultural life turns into spectacle.

The idea of acting out a utopian vision of communism had its counterpart in the determination of many young people (as well as a fair number of older people) to express a debased version of modernism. Dickstein observes that "during the sixties both poetry and theory made a pact with the devil and descended into the street, following Marx's admonition to change the world, not merely to interpret it." According to this view, the embers of literary modernism were stoked by such prophets as Mailer, Brown, and Marcuse and made the basis of a new cultural-political "praxis." In contrast to the academic guardians of the emasculated cultural modernism of the '50s, the experimental young people of the '60s (the only ones who count for Dickstein) attempted to live out the spirit of total opposition. This spirit, which justified an uncritical rejection of the entire present order of things, complemented the utopian vision of the future. Nervous about its effects, Dickstein nevertheless does not show that this fragmentary view of modernism dissolves important tensions into a muddled activism, destroying the boundaries between imagination and reason, aesthetics and ethics, art and politics. In the process, neither culture nor politics fares very well. When the limits of various human activities are not respected, the aesthetic discipline of art collapses and the moral discipline of politics weakens. The result is confusion, failure, and frustration. This is not simply one side of a complex period, as Dickstein would have it: it is one central pattern of a many-centered period.

Not all of the potentialities unfolded fully on a larger scale, for the generation of the '60s, along with the rest of us, was spared full success in the end. Most of the individuals who engaged the '60s directly have been able to move beyond the ideological and cultural wreckage of the time. Still, it is wise to remember old lessons that the political and cultural radicals of the '60s illustrated. They demonstrated once again the sad implications of cramming experience into a dialectic of repression and liberation: for such a practice threatens to

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destroy the liberal ideas of genuine individualism, political democracy, and cultural excellence that any reasonable version of civilized existence requires. Various permutations of debased modernism and romantic visions of psychedelic individualism and communism do not represent the only paths toward barbarism: others have lost their way in the confusing social and ideological terrain of postwar America. Nor have we yet moved onto a clear space. If we do, I believe that the task will demand, among other things, a renewal of half-forgotten liberal values and habits of mind that Dickstein—and a majority of the writers he admires most—fails to bring into clear and steady focus. Once these guiding notions are mislaid, the possibilities of genuine spiritual consolation diminish, as do the uneven chances of realizing democratic socialism in this essentially conservative culture. There is a major distinction, not fully appreciated by Dickstein, between desiring to enter the gates of Eden and planning a break-in. Without a recollection of liberal values, the distinction loses its force. It is therefore important to reconstruct the '60s around its missing center of liberal values, especially since the volume of sentimental literature by the new revisionists grows. □

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The Russian Revolution Revisited

THE BOLSHEVIKS COME TO POWER: THE REVOLUTION OF 1917 IN PETROGRAD, by Alexander Rabinowitch. New York: W.W. Norton & Co. 393 pp. $14.95.

Those of us who were raised on that version of the Russian Revolution symbolized in the storming of the Petrograd Winter Palace and the dramatic gesture of Antonov-Ovseenko, he of the broad-brimmed, black felt hat, as he bursts into the room where Kerensky's ministers are seated and, with a gesture of his arm, sweeps them all into the "dustbin of history"—we will never forget the impact this conception of the revolution had upon us. It is therefore a little disconcerting to read in Alexander Rabinowitch's revisionist account of Petrograd 1917 that the Winter Palace was never really "stormed," but that the collapse of resistance led, rather, to a gradual "infiltration."

Many elements had joined together to form an essentially romantic notion of the revolution, not the least Trotsky's classic *History*, John Reed's passionate *Ten Days that Shook the World*, Eisenstein's great film *October* (the original version, not the shamefully truncated one with Trotsky excised that now circulates on public television).

But then, with time, under the impact of the horrors of Stalinism—and with a new view of Lenin, single-handedly and by the force of his magnetic personality and powerful mind forcing through the revolution against his own party's backsliders—a new view emerged, presenting the revolution as a Blanquist *coup d'état* engineered by a conspiratorial handful at whose head stood Lenin, master of the "hardline" strategy. The revolution was the achievement of a determined group, with the Petrograd masses forming a confused and pliable backdrop to the events.

Alexander Rabinowitch has reexamined these contradictory views and produced the most serious study of the October revolution to appear in many years. His political study of revolutionary events in Petrograd and Russia from the summer of 1917 to the Bolshevik seizure of power in October is based on impressive original research using the Russian

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sources, including minutes, protocols, and accounts of meetings of the Petrograd district soviets and other institutions whose activities were hitherto unknown, at least to a non-Russian audience. The author gives us the full range of Bolshevik political opinion, including major disagreements within the party—disagreements he analyzes dispassionately and in remarkably non-polemical fashion.

Rabinowitch rejects the views of Masaryk ("The October Revolution was anything but a popular movement; the revolution was the act of leaders working from above and behind the scenes.")—and he gives us a new context for the viewpoint implicit in Trotsky's scornful response to Masaryk that, "as a matter of fact, it was the most popular mass-insurrection in all history." While stressing the deep link between the party's revolutionary tactics and the Petrograd masses, Rabinowitch attacks the notion that, thanks to Bolshevik unity, discipline, and, above all, to Lenin's revolutionary leadership, the revolution was "inevitable." That Lenin's tight, highly disciplined and monolithic party was ready to seize power when the opportunity arose, according to this author, is sheer myth—and he proceeds to demonstrate that the Bolshevik party grew in 1917 precisely because it was relatively open, relatively democratic in practice, and far more sensitive to the wishes of the Petrograd masses than its rivals. This is a fundamentally fresh view of Lenin, his role, and his party.

IN 1917 THE INFLUX of tens of thousands of new members necessarily led to a considerable weakening of Lenin's prior concept of the party as a closed movement of professional revolutionaries. The Petrograd workers who poured into the party were not interested in that kind of existence. Hence the Bolshevik organization in 1917 was one of "lively debate and spirited give-and-take." Hence "my research," writes Rabinowitch, "suggests that the relative flexibility of the party, as well as its responsiveness to the prevailing mass mood, had at least as much to do with the ultimate Bolshevik victory as did revolutionary discipline, organizational unity, or obedience to Lenin." It was this "lively debate" and "spirited give-and-take" that often aroused Lenin's rage. He saw in it indeed signs of wavering, if not a downright betrayal of the revolutionary cause itself, as his denunciations of Zinoviev, Kamenev, and other leading proponents of "moderate Bolshevik" views testify.

If we take the Kronstadt soviet as typical of the political evolution of the thousands of workers', peasants', soldiers' and sailors' district soviets throughout the land, in late August and early September 1917 the demands of this vanguard soviet were still strikingly moderate and democratic: "a decisive rupture with the capitalists; the transfer of power into the hands of revolutionary workers, peasants, and soldiers; and the creation of a democratic republic." In this projected soviet democratic government, all socialist groups would work together (the Kronstadt soviet was noted for the harmony of its internal political relationships). The political resolutions adopted from time to time were not the property of any single party but the work of Bolsheviks, Left SRs (Social Revolutionaries), and Left- or Internationalist-Mensheviks. "Some called for the creation of a government representing workers, soldiers, and peasants; others . . . insisted on transfer of power to the soviets or creation of a revolutionary government responsible to the soviet, often coupling such demands with a call for another national Congress of Soviets." There was no hint of any single party's monopoly or seizure of power.

Basic tasks set forth for the new government included confiscation of manorial lands without compensation, and their transfer to peasant committees was put into effect in advance of any scheduling of a first session of the already convoked Constituent Assembly (all parties and tendencies agreed on this measure). Also immediately, all repressive measures against working-class organizations were revoked. So was capital punishment at the front and from now on there was to be full freedom for political activity within the army. By now the army's General Staff had been purged.

Among the proposals that were to be brought before the Assembly was workers' control over industrial production, nationalization of key industries, and a special proposal for a universal democratic peace. Above all, the Constituent Assembly now was to decide democratically on Russia's future form of governance. The "moderate" Bolshevik Kamenev expressed these views in a general statement stressing the role of the soviets as "the mortar binding all fundamentally democratic forces . . . . no one can say that there exists at the present time any organization more powerful than the soviets."

One must realize that not until August 31 did the Bolshevik faction in the Petrograd soviet (which, of

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course, now had become the most powerful soviet) receive the vote of a clear majority of deputies present—and it was a majority based upon the deputies' response to the moderate Bolshevik proposals presented by Kamenev. The party's tactical course in those days centered around the forthcoming Congress of Soviets. "Prepare for the Congress of Soviets on October 20!" "Convene Regional Congresses Immediately!" "In our view the all-powerful authority over the Russian land is the Congress of Soviets . . . . All Power to the Soviets!" So wrote Zinoviev in the Bolshevik press. "Let's concentrate all our energies on preparations for the Congress of Soviets," the Central Committee of the Bolsheviks declared; "it alone will assure that the Constituent Assembly will be convened and carry forth its revolutionary work . . . . " There is no question that this echoed the views of the Petrograd masses, just as there is no visible intent here of staging an insurrection before the Congress of Soviets and the Constituent Assembly were scheduled to meet.

As it became clear that the Bolsheviks, despite the opposition of a substantial minority among their leaders, were intent upon mobilizing their forces, not simply to defend the Congress of Soviets but rather to seize power in advance through an uprising, the ranks of the Left were thrown into turmoil and confusion.

Things were to turn out quite differently than the Petrograd masses were sure they would. Soon the Bolsheviks under Lenin's whiplike leadership and with the backing of Trotsky, chairman of the Petrograd Soviet, will emerge as the dominant force; walkouts by the opposition Menshevik and SR factions will leave the Bolsheviks in control and, in essence, power will fall exclusively into their hands. The Left-SR's and the Left- or Internationalist-Mensheviks (whose spokesman was the much underrated Martov, though exhibiting great prescience, will find their warnings unheeded: "A coming-out by the workers and soldiers would be a monstrous crime . . . an attack, not on the Provisional Government, but on the soviets." The Left SR Boris Kamkov declared at an SR gathering:

> . . . it became clear to those of us working in factories and barracks that the Bolsheviks were mobilizing their forces not simply to defend the government established by the congress [of Soviets], but rather to seize power in advance of the congress . . . . Their course seemed to us both dangerous and senseless . . . . it seemed to us that it would be possible to rid ourselves painlessly of this skeleton [the Kerensky coalition] by action of the All-Russian Congress of Soviets. At the same time we believed that if this were done in another way, say by means of the seizure of power in Petrograd before the congress, this might appear to be adventurist—as the seizure of power, not by the soviets, but by one political party. It seemed to us that this would immediately complicate the situation and make it *impossible to avoid civil war* [Emphasis added— S. P.].

The Bolshevik moderates had, of course, long sounded a warning note against a unilateral seizure of power by their party. In a written summary of their arguments against Lenin's strategy, Zinoviev and Kamenev underlined the importance of the "petty bourgeoisie" (middle class). The Russian working class, they stated, could not by itself complete the revolution.

> We simply cannot lose sight of the fact that between us and the bourgeoisie there is an enormous third camp, that of the petty bourgeoisie. This camp joined with us during the Kornilov affair [an attempted monarchist coup] and brought us victory. It will ally with us again more than once . . . , but for the time being it is closer to the bourgeoisie than to [the Bolsheviks].

Denying Lenin's contention that a majority of the Russian people backed the Bolsheviks, they expressed the view that perhaps a majority of the workers and a "significant percentage" of the soldiers were with the Bolsheviks, "but everything else is questionable." Future elections to the Constituent Assembly, they accurately predicted, would find the Bolsheviks in a minority, behind the peasant-backed SR party.*

BEFORE EXAMINING Rabinowitch's version of the seizure of power, the much-argued question of Lenin's precise relation to the October revolution must be considered. We must realize that there was an extensive evolution in Lenin's own position. The Lenin of October, fiercely demanding the party's immediate seizure of power, differed considerably from the Lenin of September who, as Rabinowitch points out, had tried to reassure the moderate socialists that an end of the coalition with the

*Elections to the Constituent Assembly were held in November, as scheduled. The Bolsheviks, while winning in Petrograd, were a poor second in the Assembly, which met in Petrograd on January 5, 1918, refused to endorse the Bolshevik seizure of power, and was then forcibly dispersed by the Bolsheviks after one session.

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bourgeois parties (Kadets, etc.) would not necessarily lead to civil war: "Only the immediate transfer of all power to the soviets would make civil war in Russia impossible." "A civil war begun by the bourgeoisie against an alliance of the Bolsheviks with the Socialist Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, against the soviets of workers', soldiers', and peasants' deputies, is inconceivable. . . ." Astonishing though it may seem, some of the more radical leaders of the Petrograd Bolshevik committee objected strongly to the views of the "moderate" Lenin. But this moderation, which Lenin's opponents said was a mere ruse, quickly ended, to be replaced by the final, abrupt demand that power be seized immediately in the name of the soviets.

Rabinowitch recounts the story of how Lenin, raging at the party's hesitations and in defiance of the party's instructions to remain in hiding, donned a disguise and emerged from hiding to go to the Smolny Institute in order to spur on the party leadership. On his way to Smolny, Lenin, with his traveling companion, boarded an empty trolley car run by a conductress. He conversed with her about the political situation, found her dissatisfied with the lack of action and proceeded to explain to her his belief in the need to take power at once!

Rabinowitch sums up Lenin's effect upon the evolution of events:

> Looking back over the period between the Kornilov affair and the decision of October 10 [to seize power] one can say that, as in April, chief responsibility for this drastic transformation in the outlook of the party's top hierarchy belongs to Lenin. It was Lenin who, over a period of several weeks, alternately cajoled, pressured, and threatened his colleagues, and who, by force of argument and personal authority, ultimately succeeded in turning a majority of the Central Committee toward an insurrectionary course . . . . Few modern historical episodes better illustrate the sometimes decisive role of an individual in historical events.

As the author convincingly demonstrates, from the February revolution onward, the danger of dissension within the Bolshevik party was quite strong. Hence, whether the party would have the will to follow Lenin's increasingly urgent drive to take power remained "very much an open question." The party was in a fluid state. In the end, Lenin's insistence, supported by very few of the top Bolsheviks, that the risks of such a course were outweighed by the need to create at once an exclusively Bolshevik regime would carry the day.

The armed forces of the Bolsheviks, centering their attack upon the Winter Palace, will take possession of the city. The armed conflict, which Trotsky had just said "is not in our plans," will be unleashed and the Provisional Government will cease to exist. "The population slept peacefully," Trotsky will declare before the soviet, "and did not know that at this time one power was replaced by another." Lenin will make his dramatic appearance in the hall and announce "the construction of a proletarian socialist state." And the long midnight, now entering its 60th year, will have begun.

When an obscure delegate cries out, "You are anticipating the will of the Second Congress of Soviets," Trotsky retorts: "The will of the Second Congress of Soviets has already been predetermined by the fact of the workers' and soldiers' uprising." But had it? Previously, the moderate Mensheviks and SRs had pulled out of the Congress, later to be followed by the Menshevik-Internationalists (Martov) and the Left SRs, which left the Bolshevik faction in full command. Rabinowitch feels that this action played directly into Lenin's hands, "paving the way for the creation of a government which had never been publicly broached before—that is, an exclusively Bolshevik regime."

Although he remained a Leninist to the end, Trotsky later regretted the sharp personal break that would take place at this point between himself and Martov, leader of the Left-Mensheviks. "No, here no compromise is possible. To those who have left and to those who tell us to do this we must say: You are miserable bankrupts, your role is played out; go where you ought to go: into the dustbin of history." To which the weary Martov shouted his response: "Then we'll leave." This seems the most poignant moment of the October revolution.

Rabinowitch has written a brilliant, convincing, and exciting book. His first conclusion concerns the nature of the Bolshevik party and its evolution in the eight months between the February and October revolutions. Acknowledging the historic significance of Lenin's leadership, but rejecting as largely mythical the notion of the party's organizational unity and discipline, Rabinowitch proposes to emphasize the party's "internal relatively democratic, tolerant, and decentralized structure and method of operation, as well as its essentially open and mass character—in striking contrast to the traditional Leninist mode." More

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important is his conclusion that goes to the heart of the nature of the October revolution itself:

> . . . the Petrograd masses, to the extent that they supported the Bolsheviks in the overthrow of the Provisional Government, did so not out of any sympathy for strictly Bolshevik rule but because they believed the revolution and the Congress to be in imminent danger. Only the creation of a broadly representative, exclusively socialist government by the Congress of Soviets, which is what they *believed* the Bolsheviks stood for [emphasis added—S. P.], appeared to offer the hope of insuring that there would not be a return to the hated ways of the old regime, of avoiding death at the front and achieving a better life, and of putting a quick end to Russia's participation in the war. □

Joseph Stipanovich

Free Dissidents

UNDERGROUND NOTES, by Mihajlo Mihajlov. Mission, Kansas: Sheed, Andrews & McMeel. 204 pp. $10.

Mihajlo Mihajlov, the writer and student of Russian literature, is currently serving a seven-year prison term for dissemination of "hostile propaganda" in his native Yugoslavia. His publication of the essays reprinted in this volume was responsible for his present incarceration. They were written after he had finished an earlier four-year prison term that he served in the late 1960s. The essays reflect, even in translation, the thoughtful analysis and the trenchant prose that have provoked the ire of the Yugoslav authorities.

These essays are unified by the central theme of the spiritual renaissance that Mihajlov sees occurring in Eastern Europe and his interpretation of the meaning of that movement. This spiritual renaissance is evidenced by the writings and activities of such intellectual dissidents as Sakharov, Ginzberg, Syniavsky, and others in the Soviet Union as well as many others who are less well-known to the West (like Mihajlov himself) who live in the smaller Communist countries of Eastern Europe. These individuals are linked, according to Mihajlov, by a spiritual bond of common striving and experience and by the physical bond of the *samizdat*—the legendary underground publishing system operated by these dissidents throughout Eastern Europe.

The most crucial problem that Mihajlov faced was to develop a valid critique of Communist totalitarianism. He argues:

> The will for absolute power is the fundamental inner force of communism. But since it is impossible to have power over the spiritual world, communism makes every effort to destroy spiritual life, to replace it with a fictitious one over which it has power and which itself serves as the instrument of enslavement. Thus, for instance, all history is replaced by fictitious history . . . in all spheres of spiritual life, every force of Communist fictionalism is directed not toward making people think in a Communist way but toward making them *not think at all.*

Many Western scholars, politicians, and popular spokesmen have condemned Soviet communism because of its obsession with power, but such condemnations have been included in general indictments of socialism. Mihajlov, however, does not condemn socialism because of the aberration of communism. Socialism need not be "heaven on earth," and it need not represent the fulfillment of all of man's aspirations. The socialist order is acceptable to Mihajlov if it is

> conceived only as a more justly organized society in the socioeconomic sphere for then there would be no need (for socialists) to negate the ontological reality of the spiritual sphere.

The nature of Mihajlov's spiritual renaissance now becomes more apparent. He sees in the Soviet dissidents and their brethren in Eastern Europe the potential for transforming the rigid Communist system into a humane socialist system which allows free spiritual growth and maximizes the realization of socioeconomic justice.

Mihajlov places heavy stress on a concept of conformity, the "sacrifice of the individual (who represents the future) to society (which represents the present)." Such a sacrifice is an act of self-betrayal on the part of the individual and it is destructive of self. It is self-destructive in that conformity requires the individual to give up responsibility for his acts in exchange for the material satisfactions of employment and social acceptance. This self-denial of will and the anguish that follows result in the acceptance by the

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individual of external, impersonal forces controlling his life.

An appreciation of the ill effects of conformity is heightened in people in the Communist countries, according to Mihajlov, because they are imprisoned in an ultimate sense. Because society itself is a prison, the removal of the individual from society does not result in further isolation. The isolation caused by conformity in Communist society is more deadening than the isolation to be found in the camps. It is within the labor camps, in fact, that spiritual bonds are forged anew, through the regeneration of responsibility within each individual who has been stripped of all illusions in the course of his experience. People who have not experienced this regeneration, whether they live in a Communist or capitalist state, "do not understand the most important questions facing man (such as sin, slavery, suffering, freedom, and death) and hence live as though they are in a dream."

Mihajlov rejects nationalism and cultural chauvinism. He also rejects the use of violence. Violent means would deny the need for spiritual regeneration and the perpetrators would find themselves repeating the errors of the revolutionary socialists. When the attainment of power becomes the primary goal of any revolutionary movement, discipline becomes paramount, individual responsibility is again sacrificed, and the pursuit of social and economic justice gets lost in the process. Mihajlov pins his hopes for the realization of future change on the effectiveness of thought itself.

To a large and surprising extent, Mihajlov's entire analysis depends upon the potential of the West to find its bearings and avoid the pitfalls of the totalitarian experience. Mihajlov is pessimistic about the capacity of the West to effect its own regeneration.

> The biggest question is whether it is possible to come to that true freedom, democratic legality, organic order, without going through the illness of totalitarianism. On the answer to that depends the fate of the West. But the students, the poor, the colored population, all those in whom Marcuse believes, are more or less infected by the spirit of violence, which means the totalitarian spirit.

The ability or lack thereof to overcome this spirit of violence will decide, in Mihajlov's view, the future for all men. The spiritual renaissance in Eastern Europe must become international in scope to meet the international challenges of decadent affluence and totalitarianism. □

Emanuel Geltman

Of Mice or Men?

MEN AGAINST MCCARTHY, by Richard M. Fried. New York: Columbia University Press. 428 pp. $15.

Toward the end of this exhaustive study, Mr. Fried compresses a definition of McCarthyism into "semantic violence." The dictionary consensus defines it as reckless accusation of pro-Communist activity unsupported by proof or, more generally, as the employment of unfair investigative procedures, especially against government employees. I should like to add my own: a pipsqueak menace allowed to balloon into a frightening assault on civil liberties by timidity and indecision inside and outside of government circles. By any definition McCarthyism existed long before the Senator from Wisconsin appeared on the scene, and continues in one form or another.

Mr. Fried has not attempted a full-scale inquiry into all of McCarthy's antics and the fear they generated. There is some virtue in this. There is a vast literature on McCarthy and the "ism" he contributed to the shorthand of politics. What remains to be done is to view this "ism" in historical perspective and there is, consequently, much to be said for the restricted "focus in this essay upon the McCarthy problem as his political foes perceived it and . . . the strategy and tactics" they employed. The book, then, is concerned almost exclusively with "McCarthyism [as] preeminently a weapon deployed by Republicans to end the Democratic hegemony." Within these limits it is thorough beyond complaint. The "outside" world of fear that swept beyond government personnel and agencies is hardly mentioned. Readers who retain a memory of that unsavory pair of "investigators," lawyer Roy M. Cohn and Pvt. David Shine, will find only incidental references to them here. Yet, for a brief time, their demagogic impudence could create havoc in government agencies. (From what one hears of them today, they haven't improved much.)

McCarthy came out of nowhere politically; not an unfamiliar phenomenon. Playing on a latent and, let it be said, populist fear of subversive activity, McCarthy propelled himself to prominence with a wild invention of numbers—just that, numbers, rarely names—of alleged

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subversives in the State Department, over 200 in one speech, a smaller number in another when pressed to name names. The names that did turn up (Lattimore, Service, for example) had already received their share of investigatory accusation, and they had their defenders in high office, such as Dean Acheson. Mr. Fried ably summarizes the investigative binge, the proliferation of loyalty probes. (Had Fried reached further back in history, he surely would have recorded the fear of Communism exemplified by the Palmer raids that followed upon the First World War. McCarthy's rantings, and they were hardly more than that, were benign compared with the Palmer episode.)

In capsule, it is Mr. Fried's thesis that the Republicans, even those few who had little taste for McCarthy's methods, saw in his sweeping irresponsibility an opportunity to belabor the Democrats. (A little put out, perhaps, by having the Communist issue preempted by an upstart, Nixon, in his own "McCarthyite" campaign against Helen Gahagan Douglas, kept the Wisconsinite at a distance, limiting him to one speech in California.)

The "Men Against McCarthy" were mostly in the Democratic party, and they included one woman (Republican), Margaret Chase Smith, who with six fellow Republicans issued a "Declaration of Conscience." While they followed party line in deploring the Administration's "complacency to the threat of Communism here and abroad," they reproved Republican colleagues (unnamed) for "the selfish exploitation of fear, bigotry, ignorance, and intolerance," objecting to the Senate becoming a "forum of hate and character assassination sheltered by the shield of congressional immunity." Mr. Fried finds a more prevalent Republican view attributed to Senator John W. Bricker: "Joe, you're a dirty son of a bitch, but there are times when you've got to have a son of a bitch around, and this is one of them."

While there were indeed "Men Against McCarthy," from President Truman on down, few were prepared to tangle with him in rough-and-tumble—notably Senator William Benton during his brief tenure in the Senate. (Arrogance and self-confidence, with both of which Benton was amply supplied, may also serve the good guys.) Tom Dewey's defeat in 1948 had emboldened conservative Republicans to use any means by which they could mount an attack on the Truman administration. Truman, at first, dismissed McCarthy as a hollow threat—"the greatest asset the Kremlin has"—but by 1950 he came to realize that McCarthy was more than a passing nuisance. Truman prevailed on Millard E. Tydings, an impeccably conservative Maryland senator, to head a commission to investigate McCarthy's charges. Unaccustomed as he was to rough treatment, Tydings clashed repeatedly with McCarthy but, on the evidence presented here, still did not take him seriously enough. Esteemed by his colleagues, secure in his conservatism, and presumably a shoo-in for reelection that year, he was defeated by John Butler in a campaign so blatantly foul and dishonest (it included a faked composite photo, given wide circulation, showing Tydings standing with Earl Browder) that it led to a Senate probe, which eventually dribbled away into a minor embarrassment for Butler. Significantly, however, it was the *one* 1950 campaign in which McCarthy's participation seems to have made a difference. Elsewhere, though McCarthy hopped around on speechifying errands for Republican candidates, he appears to have had little effect on the outcome, according to Fried's painstaking reconstruction of each contest.

By 1951, the White House had concluded that the "be quiet and he will go away" approach had failed. Yet Richard Fried finds "little direct evidence of advance planning or coordination underpinning this counterattack." The 1952 campaign was, in many ways, a reprise of the 1950 elections—plus Eisenhower! Ike kept McCarthy at arm's length, but the Senator crept into campaigns here and there, wherever he could make a speech, with mixed results at best. The General's coattails proved a more useful bit of cloth than McCarthy's shabby "shirt." Benton did go down to defeat, but to a Republican who had made no more than grudging use of McCarthy, relying more on Irish support and Ike's pull. (It should be noted, for those who have forgotten, that this was the year John F. Kennedy ran against Henry Cabot Lodge in Massachusetts. McCarthy did not electioneer for Lodge, and Kennedy projected something less than a profile in courage by not speaking out against McCarthy. "When Lodge"—and again I quote from Fried—"allegedly asked the Democratic governor, Paul Dever, about home-state reaction to his colleague [McCarthy], Dever had replied that 'your people don't like him, but unfortunatley mine [the Boston Irish] do.'")

It is impossible to do justice to the scholarly detail presented within the limited frame the author has chosen. Along the way, he indirectly takes issue with some revisionist historians who see McCarthyism principally as an extension of Trumanism. (One wishes that the author had

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departed from his dissertational purposes long enough to pursue these polemically intriguing matters.) McCarthy was ultimately brought down in the Army hearings. Whatever the drama of popular recollection, Fried devotes relatively little space to McCarthy's antagonist, lawyer John Welch. Fried has written a book, not a TV script.

BECAUSE OUR LANGUAGE has embraced the word "McCarthyism," it is worth recalling that the whole McCarthyite affair peaked and declined within a brief few years, 1950 to 1954, which is not to say that the damage of fear was not real enough, whether in government, in factories, or—and very visibly—in the media. The point I wish to make, and it is mine, not Mr. Fried's, though I find support in the evidence he has assembled, is that *if* fewer people had run scared, *if* more people had thumbed their noses at McCarthy and his little band of bandits, *if* more people had had the political and moral sense (sense, it hardly required much courage) not to hide from improbable concentration camps that were simply not in the cards then—*if, if, if*—we would have been spared McCarthy's outrages sooner, and others as well.

I recall that when *Dissent* first appeared some damned it as too far to the "left," and some as too far to the "right"—much the same as now. But, and this is the point, there were also those who felt we had undertaken some extraordinarily courageous feat in publishing a socialist magazine at a time of "palpable" repression. Yet, as I remember it, there were no heroes among us; our worries were more pragmatic, as they still are: would we raise the money, get enough good articles, attract enough readers? Given the climate of the time, there were those who were afraid to subscribe, preferring to get their copies "anonymously" at newsstands, even as the heat of the McCarthy era slipped into the tepid waters of Ike's ineffable syntax.

What engaged our interest more was the descent of all-too-many in the literary-academic liberal-left into what Irving Howe then labeled the "Age of Conformity" in a much-talked-about *Partisan Review* article, a theme that had also been put forward in the very first issue of *Dissent*. Looking back, "this age of conformity"—skipping the backlash of '60s-activist extremism—has proved more debilitating than the firecracker explosions of McCarthyism. Some of its notable exemplars, Howe's targets then and now, are still with us, except that "conformity" has, sadly (predictably?), degenerated into unabashed conservatism. □

David Kusnet

Who Killed New York City?

THE ABUSE OF POWER: THE PERMANENT GOVERNEMTN AND THE FALL OF NEW YORK, by Jack Newfield and Paul Dubrul. New York: Viking Press. 366 pp. $10.95.

New York City's financial crisis has been a tragedy for many Americans who never travel east of the Hudson River. Wherever public employees demand a living wage, women's groups demand day-care facilities for children, poor people demand adequate health care, or working-class students demand affordable college tuitions, they run head-on into the charge of New York City's profligacy. No longer need the opponents of public services argue their point of view on its merits; they need merely cite the plight of New York City as evidence for the failure of welfare liberalism.

Following the New York example, state and local governments are "solving" their real or imagined budget crises by cutting back services for the needy, offering special benefits for private businesses, and firing public employees or freezing their pay. If the New York City crisis did not exist, American capitalism would have had to create it.

As *The Abuse of Power* reveals, that's exactly what happened. In this invaluable history, Jack Newfield and Paul Dubrul show that the New York City crisis is much more a product of our economic system than of liberal attempts to meddle with it. Newfield and Dubrul focus on the interests and institutions that profited during the heady years when New York City sold $13 billion in debt issues—interests and institutions that still are doing very well, thank you, while counseling their fellow citizens on the virtues of sacrifice.

The banks enriched themselves by selling the extraordinary volume of tax-exempt city debt issues, or keeping them in their own vaults and then dumping the securities on the market—after their own losses on the ill-fated Real Estate Development trusts, shaky Third World governments, Nelson Rockefeller's insolvent Urban Investment Corporation, and other dubious loans forced them to reexamine their own portfolios. Con Ed has earned its guaranteed rate of profit by building more generating capacity than it ever needed and then charging consumers the highest electric rates in the nation. An unholy alliance of builders,

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architects, lawyers, politicians, insurance companies, and nursing-home operators systematically bilked the social programs—from Medicaid, to day care, to subsidized housing—whose excessive costs are generally perceived as having pushed New York City toward bankruptcy.

The Abuse of Power is filled with anecdotes, statistics, and accounts of events that have not been reported elsewhere. But this is also an explicitly ideological work, designed to refute the conventional wisdom that has been offered by everyone from the *New York Times* to the *Wall Street Journal*, to *Time* and *Newsweek*. It's a welcome antidote to the accepted view, summed up by the ex-liberal political operative Ken Auletta in *New York Magazine*, that the city was bankrupted by "a noble experiment in local socialism and income redistribution."

II

THE BOTTOM FELL OUT of the market for New York City bonds only after the major New York banks, led by David Rockefeller's Chase Manhattan, sold approximately $2.3 billion of the city's securities, as they emptied out their portfolios between the summer of 1974 and March 1975. Later, of course, these same banks made more money from issues of special Municipal Assistance Corporation securities—at sky-high interest rates—and then dictated the reorganization of New York City finances on their own terms. But the *New York Times* played down the story of the banks' dumping New York City paper—literally burying the item on the obituary page!

Another major private institution, Con Ed, was in difficult financial straits (although the utility was still making money) during the aftermath of the Arab oil boycott in early 1974. Fuel bills increased, the use of electricity declined, consumers delayed in paying their bills, and the utility was short of cash. In an apparent effort to create panic, Con Ed skipped a dividend that would have cost only $28 million, and so plunged the market for utility stocks into chaos. Less than a month later, the New York State legislature approved a $500 million bail-out for Con Ed, in the form of an agreement to use public funds to pay for the construction of two new Con Ed power plants. Today Con Ed is again financially sound, earning an 8 percent profit for its investors, at a time when both New York State and New York City are in much shakier condition than the purveyor of the nation's highest-priced electricy. In its coverage of Con Edison, just as with its reporting on the banks, the *New York Times* accepted coroprate claims at face value and never published an in-depth report on the utility's miraculous recovery.

The problem is not that the media have deliberately falsified their coverage of the fiscal crisis but that private interests have escaped the close scrutiny routinely applied to public officials or to representatives of working people and the poor. John DeLury of the sanitation workers' union and Albert Shanker of the teachers' union are portrayed in the *Times* as brokers for special interest groups, which indeed they are, but Charles Luce of Con Ed and David Rockefeller of Chase Manhattan are allowed to parade through the news pages as representatives of the broader public interest, which they most certainly are not.

III

NEWFIELD AND DUBRUL do not deny that a generation of New York City politicians converted municipal finances into a virtual Ponzi scheme, under which steadily increasing volumes of debt issues were paid off, not with tax revenues, but with the sale of still more bonds. Like any chain-letter scheme, the budget scam had to end one day—and the day of reckoning came soon after the bankers began dumping tons of the city's paper on the market. *The Abuse of Power* tells the sorry tale of New York's finances once again, but makes clear that there were other participants in the scheme besides Robert Wagner, John Lindsay, and Abraham Beame.

Nelson Rockefeller, governor of New York State from 1959 until 1973, approved the legislation under which New York City was first authorized to sell bonds in anticipation of estimated future tax revenues. Moreover, Rockefeller created the never-ending list of special state authorities that issued "moral obligation" bonds—bond issues that did not have to be approved by the voters in statewide referenda, but for which the State Legislature accepted the "moral obligation" to appropriate the necessary funds to pay off the bonds. In a rare example of the domino theory in action, the default of the most ambitious of Rockefeller's special authorities—the Urban Development Corporation—triggered the dumping of New York City bonds, which, in turn, set off the "fiscal crisis."

Gerald Ford may have waxed righteous about New York City's jerry-built financial structures, but Newfield and Dubrul explain that the architects of New York's financial pyramid schemes were the finest Republican financeers in the land. Innovative Nelson Rockefeller devised

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New York's paper economy; prudent David Rockefeller's Chase Manhattan Bank underwrote the bond issues; honest John Mitchell originated the concept of "moral-obligation" financing; and careful William Simon was among the more energetic of the bond salesmen during the "go-go" '60s, when New York paper, like other dubious stocks and bonds, found a ready market among investors. In fairness, New York City's bizarre financial policies should be viewed as an orthodox Republican scheme to line bankers' pockets—not as a Democratic program to throw money at the poor.

As *The Abuse of Power* reveals, public officials did indeed make the decisions that bankrupted New York City, but they did so in pursuit of private priorities, not ambitious social goals. Drawing heavily upon David Muchnik's article "Death Warrant for the Cities," which appeared in the December 1976 *Dissent*, Newfield and Dubrul describe how public funds followed private investment out of the northeastern industrial cities—first to the suburbs whose growth was underwritten by the post-World War II housing and highway programs, later to the Sunbelt of the West and Southwest, which received the bulk of federal spending during the Nixon-Ford years. Even while Gerald Ford was delivering sermons about New York's spendthrift ways, New York State paid $39.007 billion in federal taxes in 1975, but received only $24.269 billion in federal spending. In contrast, California paid $28.510 billion in federal taxes—but received $35.838 billion in federal spending!

If New York City was victimized at the federal level by the conservative coalition of Nixon Republicans and Southern Democrats, then the city's voters have no one to blame but their own elected representatives for the equally disastrous misuse of public funds at the local level. The Wagners, Lindsays, and Beames come and go, but, in Newfield's apt phrase, the "permanent government" of politicians, bankers, real estate investors, builders, corporate leaders, and well-connected lawyers mismanages the city's affairs year after year. The permanent government is bipartisan, enrolling Democrat-Liberals and Republican-Conservatives, "reformers" and regulars, in the business arrangements that determine who obtains lucrative public contracts, Medicaid dollars, and state and city Mitchell-Lama loans to build heavily subsidized "middle-income" housing that only the wealthy can afford.

(continued on page 454)

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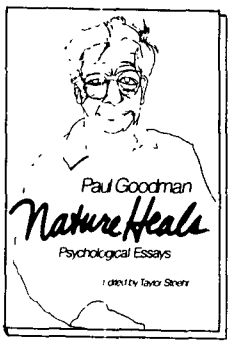

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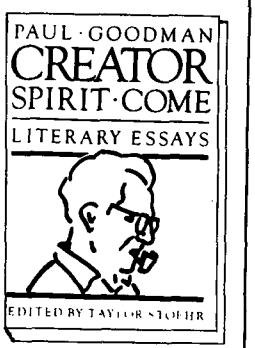

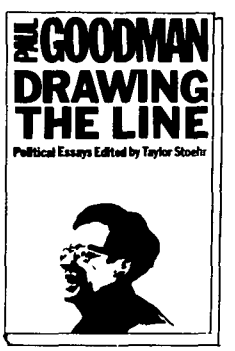

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Nicolaus Mills

Looking Back to the Sixties

It is billed, by its own production company, as a "warm and comic exploration of the rapidly changing world of a group of friends working on a small weekly newspaper." And certainly it is this softness that accounts for its audience appeal. But Joan Micklin Silver's *Between the Lines* is far more than a 1970s gang-spirit picture. A worthy successor to her *Hester Street,* it is the best film we have had so far on what happened to the college radicals of the 1960s.

Between the Lines opens with a helicopter shot of the Boston skyline. Slowly we circle the gigantic Hancock Towers (an architectural disaster that became a news story when its windows kept popping out and falling into the street below). Then we are on the ground, in the middle of Copley Square, and the first voice we hear is that of Michael J. Pollard, hawking copies of the *Back Bay Mainline.* The change from the hard, glassy architecture of the new Boston to the stately old Boston of H. H. Richardson and Charles McKim is jarring, and in this setting only the rumpled Pollard—and by extension the *Mainline*—seem capable of bridging both worlds, making what is modern and efficient human as well. By the end of *Between the Lines,* however, any such possibility is out of the question. The *Mainline* has been sold to a smarmy publishing mogul (Lane Smith), and most of the paper's old staff has quit or been fired.

What makes *Between the Lines* so telling and unexpected is, however, that this kind of neat generational contrast is precisely what Silver and screenwriter Fred Barron, a former reporter on the *Boston Phoenix* and the *Real Paper,* allow for and then destroy by carefully avoiding a morality play in which the tough business world administers a dose of reality to the radical young. The real focus of *Between the Lines* rests not with the struggle between '70s money men and '60s print men but with the internal dissolution of a once-innovative paper. Very early in the film we see that with the exception of Lynn (Jill Eikenberry), the receptionist and mother hen of the *Mainline,* the staff is not solidly committed to the radical politics that brought the paper into existence. Harry (John Heard), the *Mainline*'s star investigative reporter, is now interested in life-styles (his current story is about strippers); Abbie (Lindsay Crouse), the staff photographer, is ready to leave the *Mainline* as soon as "something better comes along." Michael (Stephen Collins) wants to write a book on the '60s instead of doing "reporting crap." And Laura (Gwen Welles), who has been with the *Mainline* almost from its inception, just goes on turning out copy for want of anything better to do.

IT IS THIS state of restless ambivalence on the part of the *Mainline* staff that is grist for the pervasive humor of *Between the Lines,* and what follows for most of the picture is a series of encounters that are a combination of hip bedroom farce and comedy of manners. Silver is willing to keep her camera in place for long periods of time, and the result is a series of hilarious sequences: among them, a reverse-roles love scene between Abbie and Harry that occurs when she shows up at his apartment late at night and he takes the stance of the about-to-be-seduced; an Irwin Corey-like music lecture that Max (Jeff Goldblum), the *Mainline*'s Rock critic, delivers at a women's college (during which he manages to give out his phone number); and a conversation between Harry and David (Bruno Kirby), the *Mainline*'s cub reporter, in which Harry tries to convince David that the story he is doing on whales would be improved if only he wrote it from the whale's point of view.

In all of this the comedy of *Between the Lines* maintains its edge because without recourse to preachment or ideology it fixes on the disparity

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between the lives of the *Mainline* staff in the '70s and the political turmoil that brought them together. Time and again we hear those on the paper refer back to the golden '60s (on one occasion the nostalgia comes immediately after a love scene) and the more they reminisce, the more apparent it becomes that their real tie to the '60s has been a loose one. They are the best and the brightest of a rebellious college generation that defined itself in terms of radical politics and yet never on the whole became radicalized. When Laura looks at a picture of a rally she went to, she speaks of it as though it were a giant prom; and when Harry discusses a hospital exposé he did, it is not in terms of anyone he helped but with a sense that he "shook things up." It is the excitement of the journalistic chase, the pleasure of working together and affronting the establishment that has been the real stimulant for the *Mainline* staff, and with this "high" now over, what they cling to and choose to come down on are the stylistic changes the '60s brought about—in dress, in sex, in dope, in music.

What gives *Between the Lines* its richness is that it keeps this total picture in focus. It won't, as do so many attacks on the '60s, dismiss the wit and energy of the decade. Yet in scene after scene it makes clear that ten years later, when the wit and energy of the decade are all that its middle-class "radicals" retain, there was something fundamentally wrong—and certainly politically parasitic—in the lives they led. To pursue this kind of thinking at a time when so many retrospective studies of the '60s try to define its end in terms of a single event (King's assassination, Nixon's election, the last March on Washington) is no mean accomplishment. A few novelists—notably Ann Beattie in *Chilly Scenes in Winter,* Eleanor Bergstein in *Advancing Paul Newman,* Lisa Alther in *Kinflicks*—have tried something similar, but Silver in a movie produced without a star and on a modest budget has gone further than they, and in addition opened up the biggest question of all for the generation of reporters and writers who came of age in the '60s—where next? □

BOOKS *continued from page 452*

The permanent government and its friends profited from the unheralded decisions that bankrupted New York City. Builders demolished hundreds of small businesses in Lower and Mid-Manhattan to make way for high-rise buildings, including the state-financed "World Trade Center," creating a glut of unrented office space. Nursing-home operators, among them the ineffable Bernard Bergman, ripped off an estimated $300 million in Medicaid funds in just one year, while profiting from the misery of the elderly. The city fails to collect an estimated $570.8 million a year in real estate taxes from the landlords, and loses an additional $300 million from sales taxes collected by merchants but never turned over to the tax collector. Meanwhile, in the wake of the city budget cutbacks, students sit 45 in a class, municipal hospitals have been shut down, the subway fare has risen to 50¢, free tuition is a memory at City University, and working mothers have been forced to quit their jobs following the closing of public day-care centers. And, despite the obligatory rhetoric about the need to attract new jobs to the city, job-creating housing construction, neighborhood rehabilitation, and industrial park projects have all been eliminated.

SOME journalists, urbanists, and bureaucrats may find much to disagree with in *The Abuse of Power*, whose villains include virtually every major business and political leader of the past two decades, and whose lone hero is Charles Rosen, leader of the successful rent strike at the Co-op City housing development. I, for one, quarrel with Newfield's and Dubrul's glib declaration that the municipal employees' union leader Victor Gotbaum has allowed "the business elite running New York City [to] effectively run his union." As the authors themselves acknowledge, District Council 37 has "survived" under Gotbaum's resilient leadership, and, as with the State of Israel, mere survival has been no mean achievement. As this is written, Gotbaum has almost single-handedly resisted the bankers' effort to attain a permanent veto power over the city budget, and the municipal employees' union pension funds have become the city's preeminent banker. So, District Council 37 has prevented the imposition of total indecency upon city workers and the people who depend on them.

Newfield and Dubrul have here compiled a history of the fiscal crisis that effectively debunks the corporate conservatives' myth about New York City. And it comes not a moment too soon! □

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H. W. Benson

Union Democracy, the Department of Labor, & the Sadlowski Campaign

How do you get a fair union election? Sometimes it becomes a dizzying experience, as Edward Sadlowski has discovered after running as an insurgent candidate for president of the huge United Steelworkers of America.

I: In The Union

On February 8, 1977, Steelworkers voted for national officers of their union. According to unofficial reports that were promptly announced by the officials, the count showed an 86,000 majority for Lloyd McBride, the administration candidate for president, a victory for the official family slate of top officers backed by incumbent president I. W. Abel. Twelve weeks later, the tellers reduced the putative margin to 79,580 when their report announced that McBride had polled 328,861, or 57 percent—and Sadlowski 249,281 or 43 percent. The membership had spoken. They had selected the leadership they wanted. It was the democratic way. Or was it?

Sadlowski is skeptical. His doubts are catalogued in a 36-page election protest, presented first to the tellers and then to the union's international executive board, charging among other things that ballot boxes in some locals were stuffed; that staff employees campaigned for the administration slate on paid union time; that Sadlowski was denied timely information on where ballots would be cast and counted; that there was violence and intimidation against Sadlowski campaigners and observers; that in some locals there were more ballots cast than there were members; that the secrecy of the balloting was widely violated.

The protest cited nine charges of physical assault and of threats made to Sadlowski campaigners. There were two attacks on John Askins: at the Republic Steel plant in Gadsen, Alabama, in July 1976, and in August at the Armco plant in Houston, Texas, followed a day later by the shooting of Ben Corum in the neck at the Hughes Tool plant in that city. Other beatings were charged in Calera, Alabama; at the Carpenters Steel plant in Bridgeport, Connecticut; at the Estelco plant in Pennsylvania; at the Republic Steel plant in Buffalo, New York.

One example of six complaints of ballot-box stuffing: in Local 15530, the Sadlowski observer arrived 15 minutes before the voting was scheduled to begin and found the box already one-third full.

In Local 4203, there were more votes than members: "The plant had been closed for three weeks and had only 150-200 employees when in operation. The vote was reported as McBride 196—Sadlowski 6."

These are only a few illustrative samples from Sadlowski's election protest. In summary, to use the phrase written into federal law, Sadlowski charges that he was denied "adequate safeguards to insure a fair election."

Sadlowski's own firsthand experience in an earlier contest, still fresh in mind, is enough to make him leery of Steelworkers elections. He made his debut as an insurgent in 1973 when he bucked the official candidate for director of the 125,000-member District 31, Chicago, the biggest in the union. Then, as now, the official count went against him. Supposedly he had lost 23,394 to 21,616, but when he proved that the election was riddled with fraud, the U.S. Department of Labor

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filed suit in federal court to void the results. When the union finally agreed to a rerun, Sadlowski walked away with that second election, winning in 1974 by almost two to one: 39,637 to 20,158. The first election had been supervised by the union administration itself, and so its candidate was assured of a goodly amount of votes. The second election was supervised by representatives of the Department of Labor.

Sadlowski is now challenging the 1977 election. Would the outcome change, as in 1974, if a new election again were supervised by an impartial outside agency? The answer will be a long time in coming.

But that 79,580 margin seems so impressive . . . Could so lopsided a tally be simply laid to fraud? The same question might have been posed when Jock Yablonski claimed foul in the United Mine Workers' presidential election of 1969, in which the official returns put him behind Tony Boyle by 80,000 to 45,000. Yablonski's reported performance with only 36 percent of the vote was substantially less favorable than Sadlowski's with 43 percent. Nevertheless, when the Labor Department conducted a new miners' election in 1972, the insurgent, Arnold Miller, defeated Boyle by 70,000 to 56,000.

We recall, of course, that between the two miners' elections, Yablonski, his wife, and his daughter were murdered, an outrage that surely affected the election rerun. The Steelworkers are not the Miners. Nevertheless, based on current facts and recent history, Sadlowski has a strong case that is cogently presented in his internal union election appeal.

Some Background

BACK IN 1965, when David McDonald faced a challenge from I. W. Abel for Steelworkers president, both candidates were backed by rival sections of the paid staff. Although McDonald was the incumbent president, Abel was Secretary Treasurer and had the support of a narrow majority on the union's international executive board. Each side accused the other of stealing votes; there is no reason to doubt either one, for both possessed the expertise that comes from long experience in directing staff operations. Abel's staff work was obviously superior to McDonald's; he was reported to have won in a close election. Years later, mulling over the old days with a *New York Times* reporter, McDonald said (Dec. 7, 1976): "I know how to run elections. I stole four elections for Joe Germano as director of District 31."

After he was declared defeated in 1965, McDonald never bothered to appeal to the U.S. Department of Labor. Why? The patient reader who pursues this article to the end will discover that it requires determination to unravel the tedious processes that entangle unionists with the law and the Labor Department. And this is a mere reading experience. Imagine, then, how exhausting, futile, and risky the actual life experience would have been for McDonald. By bowing out, he at least ended up with a pension.

When Abel opposed McDonald, the staff split down the middle, so that the efforts of one side were matched by the other. In the face of Sadlowski's challenge, however, the staff united behind the official candidate. The 800 full-time staff representatives, who maintain close ties with locals all over the United States and Canada, are appointed and removed by the international president. Out of pure self-interest, if for no other reason, they are available as the administration's campaign machine during elections and as a dependable source of big campaign money. Some of them surely performed their election assignments with the same kind of fervor displayed by one District 31 staff man who was caught stealing votes from Sadlowski in 1973. In resigning, he offered no apology, only this explanation:

> I took an oath to uphold the tenets and doctrines that our Constitution sets forth; which calls upon all of us to preserve, protect, unify, and solidify our International Union. In the heat of a bitter election, to preserve the principles I took an oath to uphold, I did what I thought was right. I dedicated myself to prevent the destruction of our organization by individuals who I personally assessed to be extreme radicals seeking only to infiltrate into positions of leadership in our union to cause dissolution in the labor movement with their subversive propensities. . . .

Not all staff members can mesmerize themselves into the delusion that they must save the union by falsifying election counts. Nevertheless, if only half the staff were zealous and talented enough to duplicate the performance of their District 31 counterpart, and only to the extent of 250 votes each—not a difficult feat—that result would make a total difference of 100,000—far more than adequate for creating a 79,580 plurality. Or, using some slightly different arithmetic, they could get the same result with an average of only 40 votes each in half the 5,000 local unions. Did it actually happen? Without a thorough investigation, it is impossible to be sure. There were some 5,400 separate voting sites; the Sadlowski camp sent

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observers to perhaps 1,200. What happened in the other 4,200 locations where the voting process was free from the scrutiny of the Sadlowski team?

The Test of Zero

IT WOULD REQUIRE a massive staff, the kind that could be assembled only by the federal government, to go back and uncover what actually happened at 5,400 voting sites. But we can assess the validity of the count, partially and roughly, by applying what we will call the *test of zero*, that is, by simply reviewing the tabulations in all locals reported to have cast every last vote for one candidate only. According to the tellers' report, 430 locals voted unanimously for McBride. In these locals, if we believe the official count, not a single vote—zero—was cast for Sadlowski. On the other hand, only 21 locals were reported to have voted unanimously for Sadlowski.

The Landrum-Griffin Act makes this test possible by requiring a local-by-local breakdown of the vote and exposes results that are lopsided enough to be incredible, or a least suspect. Before Landrum-Griffin, the Steelworkers, like most unions, simply published overall figures that concealed local tallies in one massive total. When Donald Rarick, opposing the McDonald-Abel slate in 1957, demanded a local-by-local tally, the union administration refused to provide it.

On February 8, 451 locals supposedly voted zero-for-one. Most of these locals are small; some cast fewer than 10 votes; some just over 100. The average was 24.

Thinking about it, we get some idea of what must have been happening in hundreds of small locals where there were no opposition observers. It is impossible to make a close local-by-local check. Nevertheless, in those 451 zero-for-one locals, 10,970 votes were cast for president. We may not be able to detect a single atom, but we can weigh a whole mass. What is unobtrusive in a single local—say, 15 for McBride and zero for Sadlowski—becomes spectacular when we take all 451 locals together.

Of those 10,970 votes, 10,646 went for McBride and only 324 for Sadlowski. Looked at another way: Sadlowski, who was credited with 43 percent of the total vote, got only 3 percent in the zero-for-one locals. McBride got 97 percent or better than 32 to 1. If we rolled dice and three times in a row made 11, that could be a lucky accident. If we rolled 11 for 32 times in a row, the dice would seem to be loaded. The test of zero suggests that the dice most likely were loaded against Sadlowski.

Some of the tabulated individual results are incredible on their face: Local 7456 went 152, all, for McBride. Locals 4586 and 15167 cast 118 and 114 votes, respectively, straight down the line for the whole McBride slate and not one, even by mistake, for a single other candidate. There were Locals 7701 and 5914 casting their 214 and 226 votes, and every one for McBride. By the test of zero, almost 11,000 votes were cast under such conditions, not enough by themselves to change the outcome but enough to cast a shadow on the whole voting process.

These figures, to repeat, include only locals that voted zero for one candidate. They do not take into account other local results that are almost as incredible. To cite a few:

Local	McBride	Sadlowski
8249	425	6
6869	498	8
7625	1,282	29
8421	195	2
7593	299	6
14581	700	52

If some future referendum in a Communist country shows a majority of 97 percent for the regime, Mr. McBride as Steelworkers' president will surely expect friends to smile disdainfully at those gullible enough to swallow those figures. And if, by the test of zero, 451 local unions vote 97 percent for his administration, is there some special ground for credibility because this happens in the United States in the mighty Steelworkers?

Appeals Procedure

NOW THAT Sadlowski is convinced he was cheated, what can he do about it? He enters the world of union election appeals, a shadowy universe unfamiliar to any broad public. This is a type of work best suited to a man young enough to look toward the future, for he must gird himself for the possibility, even likelihood, of years of intricate proceedings, beginning in the union and then shifting to the Labor Department before winding up in federal court.

Before he could avail himself of the provisions of federal law, Sadlowski had to "exhaust" his

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"internal remedies." Exhausting, perhaps; remedies, no. The clauses of the Steelworkers' constitution on appeals are not particularly worse than those of most other unions, a depressing footnote on "due process" in the labor movement. To challenge the February 8 election, he had to speed an appeal to the tellers' committee by—February 18. But it was impossible, even hypothetically, to formulate a thorough appeal, because the results were not yet in. Locals have the same ten days in which to transmit their tallies to the tellers whose official report was not made until April 28. More than 11 weeks after the election, Sadlowski saw the first full report: three and a half pages of text, tersely dismissing all complaints from all dissenters, accompanied by 110 pages of charts—a solid black wall of statistical tables from almost 5,000 locals. One glance at that awesome tabulation shows how impossible it would be for any challenger to verify the accuracy of the tally after the election is over. Yet one simple discovery is possible for the first time. In his February 18 appeal Sadlowski noted that 95 locals had reported a zero, or near-zero, vote for him. Actually, the April 28 tellers' report reveals that 430 locals—tiny, small, and medium—had presumably voted zero for Sadlowski, a figure that does not even include the near-zero vote.

The tellers toured 25 cities in the United States and Canada for a period of 40 days to hold postelection hearings. Sadlowski attended only the session in his own District 31 area. But even if he could have recruited a team of couriers equipped with seven-league boots and could have afforded to dispatch them throughout the two countries, to what avail? No matter how far the tellers traveled and for how many days, they remained the same tellers, not impartial Solons carefully selected to render impartial judgment, but soldiers for the official power structure. They were originally elected on Abel's official family slate, *the very same tellers who had whitewashed the District 31 election of 1973 when Sadlowski had been counted out in the illegal election later challenged by the Labor Department.*

Even under the best of circumstances, the tellers' ability to verify election results is limited. The ballots, which are cast and counted in the locals, are never shipped for review to any central place. The local results are posted on a tally sheet, and that tally sheet alone is mailed to the tellers who simply enter the local results onto a master sheet. To assure an honest election under these conditions would require observers at every local union.

After 40 days of traveling those thousands of miles, the tellers reached their predestined conclusions. In not one instance—not even one!—did they uphold a single complaint of irregularities from an opposition candidate, not Sadlowski's, not anyone else's. "In general," they announced, "this election was the best-run election that we have had the privilege of supervising." Which may be true; but how good is their best? They attributed this happy result to assistance from the Labor Department, but it was more likely because Sadlowski was able to post perhaps 1,500 observers around the country, not enough to guarantee that the election would be fair, but perhaps enough to make it the "best."

After the tellers turned him down, Sadlowski had ten days to forward his complaint to the next higher appeals body, the union's International Executive Board. There his charges were reviewed by the same men whose candidates he tried to defeat, who contributed money to elect McBride against him, who circulated the opinion that he is a tool of outside enemies of the working class. Apart from that, they were qualified to sit in impartial judgment on his appeal, which was designed to unseat the man they want for union president. For a rough analogy, we must imagine the position of a tenant who goes to court for a rent reduction only to find his landlord sitting as presiding judge while all the others, jury and appeals court, are staffed by the landlord's relatives, lawyers, and employees.

With one major exception, this is what passes for due process in the labor movement. The outstanding honorable exception is the United Auto Workers' union, which has established a Public Review Board of eminent persons outside its power structure to act as a last court of appeals—a kind of Supreme Court that is authorized to overturn decisions of the union's highest bodies and has done so many times. In other unions, however, the officialdom will not curtail its authoritarian power to deal with critics as it sees fit.

As the earth rotated on its axis, the sun rose in the east, landlords voted for rent increases, and the International Executive Board rejected Sadlowski's challenge to the election it conducted—so Sadlowski forwarded his appeal to the U.S. Department of Labor (D of L). More precisely, his only avenue of recourse outside the union is the D of L; because, according to the provisions of the Labor-Management Reporting and Disclosure Act (LMRDA), the federal law that regulates union elections, he is barred from appealing directly to a federal judge. He must rely on the Department of

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Labor. With that, a dark door opens into the next room, stuffy with smoke and vapors

II: At the Labor Department

The Department of Labor is responsible for enforcing Title IV, the election provision of the LMRDA, which is explicit in its requirement for the fair election of union officers:

> Adequate safeguards to insure a fair election shall be provided, including the right of any candidate to have an observer at the polls and at the counting of ballots.

When the law was adopted, the mandate seemed so forthright that the problem of legitimate union elections seemed to have been solved. But the law must be read with the same skepticism required when we read clauses in the Soviet constitution guaranteeing civil rights. To understand the LMRDA, remember Catch 22. What happens when, despite the law, there is fraud in a union election? Suppose, for example, that Sadlowski succeeds in proving that the Steelworkers' election violated the law? Will the Department of Labor do something to enforce his right to a fair election? Not necessarily. In a majority of cases, the D of L does nothing for the victims of illegal elections. It has taken more than 17 years for this frustrating truth to filter out. The course of Sadlowski's appeal will inevitably provide new evidence. Even without it, the historical record is already there.

Congress adopted the LMRDA in 1959 after years of investigation, thousands of pages of testimony on corruption in unions and stolen elections, front-page headlines, and cries of scandal. Once the law was passed, however, the issue was quickly forgotten as the nation moved on to other scandals.

Using the names of its sponsors, the law was called the Landrum-Griffin Act. In 1961, the second year after his law had taken effect, Senator Robert Griffin expressed satisfaction that things were going so well:

> As a Republican who has watched carefully with the eye of a skeptic, I wish to commend Secretary [of Labor] Goldberg and Commissioner John Holcombe for the firm but fair and objective manner in which they and the Labor Department had continued to administer this Act.

Even in 1961, the Senator's optimism was sadly misplaced. Then time passed and there were doubts. Ten years later, sobered by the Labor Department's actual record, the Senator changed his mind drastically. On July 15, 1971, testifying before the Senate Labor Subcommittee, he said:

> . . . over the past twelve years, under four Administrations, the Labor Department has generally been timid and reluctant to give the Landrum-Griffin the vigorous implementation and strict enforcement that Congress expected.

He went on to call the situation "scandalous." It took three killings to shake public officials into the realization that something had gone wrong. In 1969, Jock Yablonski, an old-time United Mine Workers union leader who had come up under John L. Lewis, reached the painful conclusion that, under its incumbent president, Tony Boyle, the union officialdom was betraying its dues-payers. Yablonski ran against Boyle. After a fraudulent election, Yablonski was declared defeated—and then was murdered. The killers, hired by the union officials, broke into Yablonski's home and shot him to death along with his wife and daughter. Boyle and other union officers were convicted of murder and sentenced to life terms. (Boyle, whose conviction was upset, awaits retrial.)

During the election campaign itself, Yablonski was beaten and knocked unconscious. He called for help from the Labor Department, appealing for an investigation of continuing threats against his supporters that prevented him from electioneering in wide sections of the union. He warned that all signs pointed to a stolen election. Later, many months after Yablonski had been murdered, his main charges were sustained in federal court where the election was voided and a new one ordered. But all during the election, and immediately thereafter, the Labor Department refused to intervene, informing Yablonski that he had to wait until the election was over, then devote three months to exhaust his "internal union remedies," and only then would the Labor Department look into his complaints.

Joseph Rauh, Yablonski's attorney, warned that unless the D of L intervened, union officials would destroy the evidence of their misconduct. He understated his case . . . they would, in fact, go on to kill Yablonski. Rauh pointed to Section 601, LMRDA, which authorized the D of L to enter the picture:

> The Secretary shall have the power when he believes it necessary in order to determine whether any person has violated or is about to violate any provision of this Act . . . to make an investigation and in connection therewith he may enter such places and inspect such

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records and accounts and question such persons as he may deem necessary to enable him to determine the facts relative thereto.

The D of L simply ignored the law, insisting that it could do nothing until its prescribed dilatory procedures were completed. Once Yablonski was murdered, touching off a national scandal, the D of L hurriedly reversed itself; presumably it decided that once a man was killed, he no longer was required to exhaust his "internal union remedies." These were the events that opened Senator Griffin's eyes.

Chip Yablonski, a son of the murdered Mine Workers' leader and himself a lawyer for the insurgents, summed up his view of the D of L in his brief to the U.S. Supreme Court in another union democracy case:

> The struggle by UMWA members to overturn tyranny in their union was a lonely and difficult one in part because of the apathy and indifference, if not outright prejudice against them, by officials within the United States Department of Labor. . . . Too often, union reformers have found the Department of Labor allied with the union incumbents against their interests.

Nevertheless, when the ordeal was over, the insurgent miners succeeded in ousting the murderous clique that had seized their union. In the spotlight of a horrible murder, under pressure from a congressional investigation of events in the miners' union, the Department of Labor finally upheld the Yablonski complaint and sued in federal court. The judge authorized the union to conduct a new election—surely the first legitimate election of UMW officers in some 50 years.

But the D of L performance in the miners' election was the exceptional outcome of extraordinary events. Now comes Sadlowski. In the absence of crying national scandal, we will witness the normal D of L procedures in operation and learn anew how the Department cuts the heart out of LMRDA enforcement. Here, unless some unanticipated factor supervenes, is how it usually goes:

The Labor Department Record

A CAREFUL STUDY of the Labor Department's report, *Union Election Cases 1966-70*, indicates that out of 602 election complaints submitted to it in those years, more than 90 percent probably involved violations of the law. Of these, the Department dismissed more than half, leaving a majority of the appelants without any recourse whatsoever.* How does the agency responsible for enforcing the law on fair union elections decide to overlook so many violations of the law? Some were perhaps innocent technical oversights or minor transgressions. But others?

To follow the process through which the D of L receives complaints and disposes of them is like stumbling through the corridors of a maze. When a unionist first comes to the U.S. Department of Labor to file an election protest, assuming he has come at the proper time with precisely the right kind of complaint and fulfills other conditions, the Department is obliged to investigate. The complainant says one thing, the union officials deny it, and the Department must decide who is telling the truth. Did the violations charged in the complaint actually occur or did they not? The investigator presumably looks for evidence, conducts interviews, evaluates conflicting claims. Where does he look and how thoroughly? Whom does he believe and why? The complainant never knows, because the Department's investigation files are closed to inspection. He can only puzzle over the cut-and-dried announcement that arrives in the mail one day.

Was the law violated in the union election? The Department ruling is crucial to the complainant; for, if it goes against him, that's usually the end of his case. How does the D of L come to a decision? Can its judgment be trusted? The answer is implicit in the long experience of reformers in the Painters Union.

The Painters' Experience

FROM 1961 TO 1967, embattled Painter reformers complained to the D of L at least once a year that elections in their union were stolen; and they backed up their charges with massive evidence. During these years, two reform leaders were murdered in California; one contractor was almost murdered in New York; the head of the union's New York District Council 9 was indicted and later convicted in a bribery conspiracy. In every single instance, the D of L turned down the reformers' appeals. After years of frustration, when their cause seemed almost hopeless because of the Department's indifference, they managed to get into federal court through a happy combination of legal moves. This time, their grievances were evaluated by a federal judge who heard seven days of sworn testimony. Unlike the D of L, which had

*See *Union Democracy Review* No. 7 (1974).

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rejected every complaint, District Judge Marvin Frankel concluded:

> Since at least 1960, probably for a number of years before that, and up to the imposition of the trusteeship on October 19, 1966 (to stop there for a moment), District Council No. 9 was repressively governed and the interests of its constituent union membership poorly served and frequently betrayed, under the dominance of . . . its Secretary Treasurer and those allied with him in positions of power. Democratic procedures were ignored. The Council bylaws, of little moment to a dictatorial regime, were in a state of scattered disarray. Dissident members, seeking a voice in the management of Council affairs or an opportunity to vie for . . . office, were fought ruthlessly with all the power available to entrenched officials. . . . By private, painstaking, personal investigations, reported in testimony the court finds wholly credible, the plaintiffs proved that the practice of electoral frauds has continued into the period of the trusteeship. . . . For the most part, the evidence offered at the hearing by the plaintiffs in support of their serious charges . . . was clear, consistent, careful, and highly credible.

The same kind of evidence, publicly presented, which the judges found so highly credible in open court, had been available before to the Labor Department. How could it reach so different a conclusion in private every time? The seven-year Painters' experience suggests that the D of L decision-making process is unreliable and suspect.

Not every case is butchered as clumsily as that of the Painters. Sometimes the Department acknowledges that a complainant has indeed uncovered violations of the law. What then? Can the aggrieved unionist at last count on the fair election the law seems to promise? Not necessarily. Remember Catch 22. He may simply be shunted along a new byway to frustration. Section 402, the LMRDA enforcement provision, reads as follows:

> . . . if he [the Secretary of Labor] finds probable cause to believe that a violation of this title has occurred, and has not been remedied, he shall, within sixty days after the filing of such a complaint, bring a civil action against the labor organization as an entity in the district court of the United States . . . . If, upon preponderance of the evidence after trial upon the merits, the court finds . . . that the violation of section 401 may have affected the outcome of an election, the court shall declare the election, if any, to be void and direct the conduct of a new election under supervision of the Secretary of Labor . . . .

In short: if the violations might have affected the outcome, the complainant *may* get a new election. If they could not have affected the outcome, he surely will not. (The law puts it plainly: the D of L is supposed to decide only whether the law was violated, while the judge decides whether these violations may have affected the outcome. But the Department will not process a case to court unless it decides in advance that the outcome could have been affected. This position has been upheld in court.)

To put it another way, the complainant must demonstrate that, if the election was fair and not illegal, he might have succeeded in winning instead of losing. With such requirements, the law's guarantees begin to evaporate.

A naive citizen might assume that democratic rights, including the right to elect representatives in honest elections, apply to all, winners and losers, especially losers. Those who know how to win elections usually know how to take care of themselves. It is the loser, the underdog, who most often needs protection. But in its topsy-turvy universe, the Department of Labor protects only possible winners.

The Impossible Burden of Proof

HOW CAN you prove that you might have won a fair, legal election, when what you got was unfair and illegal? This kind of proof can be virtually impossible unless you ran in a small local where you lost by, say, 100 votes to 90. In such a case, your task might seem simple. Prove that five votes were switched from one candidate to the other, and you have a tie. Shift six votes and you "affect the outcome." Simple to you, certainly—but not to the D of L, which is fortified by a transcendental arithmetic. Don't jump to easy conclusions on how it might interpret such plain facts until you have read about Painters Local 1011.

But suppose you, the loser, were credited with only 1,000 votes, while the winners presumably got 10,000; and suppose, too, that you could prove that ballot boxes were stuffed as tightly as baloney sausages. Even then, it would be a formidable and discouraging task to prove that perhaps 9,000 votes had been stolen; it is simply impossible for any insurgent to round up enough observer-witnesses. That, precisely, was Sadlowski's problem in an election in which 550,000 votes were cast. *The D of L's criteria for a successful election challenge (did the violations affect the outcome?) therefore encourage officials who intend to engage in malpractices to act with abandon, to engage in*

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fraud on so vast a scale that a complainant is overwhelmed by an impossible burden of proof.

Ironically, then, the law, which should be a potent weapon against authoritarians who steal elections, can become instead a nagging annoyance to fair-minded union leaders who sincerely endeavor to run honest elections. A decent leadership that violates minor technicalities can become vulnerable to D of L enforcement in a close election when the loser has a chance to prove that the violations might have affected the outcome. But a freewheeling officialdom, ready for most anything, can concoct so wide a margin that it insures itself against challenge. The more widespread and effective the fraud, the more difficult it becomes to prove arithmetically, to the D of L's satisfaction, that the outcome might be different in a hypothetically fair election. The D of L is more capable of coping with petty pilferage than with grand larceny.

Painters Local 1011

MOVING ON from generalities, we can go to actual cases, beginning with Local 1011. Back in 1965, after submitting his protest against an election in Painters Local 1011, New York, Frank Schonfeld, reform leader, received the following letter from the Department of Labor, dismissing his complaint in formulas that are quite familiar to other complainants:

> The investigation disclosed that a violation of Section 401 of the Act occurred. However . . . it has been determined after consultation with the Solicitor of Labor, that there is no probable cause to believe that the violation found in this case may have affected the election outcome. Accordingly, civil action under Section 402 (b) of the Act is not warranted, and the case has been closed.

It would be hard to invent a case with simpler arithmetic. Schonfeld, who ran for two posts, was declared defeated by only 7 votes out of 500 cast and by 35 for the other. Among other violations, he proved that he had been restricted to the use of an old, obsolete mailing list while his incumbent-opponent was permitted to use one that was right up-to-date. Seventy pieces of Schonfeld literature were returned in the mail marked "addressee unknown"; and he could be certain that additional mailing pieces, forwarded by the Post Office to new addresses, arrived only after the election was over.

How was it possible to calculate that a violation affecting at least 70 voters, and probably more, could not have affected the outcome of an election that was decided by only 7 votes? When Schonfeld sued in federal court, the judge tossed out the D of L's arithmetical absurdity and ordered a full trial on the facts.

Before the suit could be litigated and brought to a conclusion, another election rolled around. Schonfeld won, and he dropped his earlier protest, leaving this question still unanswered: by what standards does the D of L decide whether violations are serious enough to affect an election outcome? Actually, there are no standards. In reply to an inquiry from the Association for Union Democracy, the D of L replied on December 17, 1976:

> Although the investigation may disclose violations of Title IV, the Secretary will not institute court proceedings unless he finds probable cause to believe that the violations "may have affected the outcome of the election". . . . The Secretary's finding of probable cause is dependent not only upon the particular violation alleged, but also upon the facts and circumstances which have been developed by the investigation in each case. Since each complaint filed under section 402 is investigated and reviewed individually, the Department has not issued any guidelines, standards, or directives.

Untroubled by guidelines, the Department of Labor is free to dart erratically from one position to another. Recently, in the Bachowski case, its stance became irrational.

The Bachowski Case

IN 1973, Walter Bachowski ran for director of Steelworkers District 20, Pennsylvania, against the administration-backed candidate. District 20 included 190 separate locals in which 24,000 votes were cast. In a three-way race, the administration man was reputedly the winner by a slim plurality. Bachowski was declared defeated, but by only 907 votes. As in Local 1011, the Department of Labor found various election violations—but dismissed Bachowski's complaint nevertheless on the familiar ground that the malpractices could not have affected the outcome. With so thin a margin for the supposed victor, such a conclusion could be justified only by an intricate set of contorted computations. After winding his way through the courts, Bachowski reached the U.S. Supreme Court, which ruled that the D of L had wide discretionary powers to dismiss complaints but that it could not be "irrational," arbitrary, and capricious. When the D of L, now required to go

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back to a district court, presented its rationale to the judge, he threw out its explanation, arithmetic and all, suggesting that it might be irrational. He gave the Department a second chance to come up with something better. Meanwhile, four years passed. In February 1977, a new regular election was held in District 20. This time Bachowski won.

With all this in mind: the bizarre mathematics in Local 1011, the irrational standards in *Bachowski*, the total lack of restraining guidelines in the D of L, we can begin to understand what Ed Sadlowski must overcome to succeed in his Steelworkers complaint.

After posting about 1,500 observers at some 1,200 sites, Sadlowski compiled evidence in support of his charges of massive election violations. But how can he possibly discover what happened at 4,200 other sites where no one was watching for him? He charges that the paid union staff campaigned illegally on union time. But how translate that kind of violation into hard voting arithmetic?

Sadlowski was declared defeated by 79,580 votes. Suppose somehow he could find reasonable proof that the election violations might have affected that balance. Would the Department of Labor hasten to his support? Who knows? Confident predictions are impossible, because decisions of the Labor Department are not based on such ordinary operations as adding and subtracting, but on more inscrutable standards.

The Standards of Power & Politics

WHAT APPEARS from the standpoint of law or logic to be "irrational" in Labor Department Title IV enforcement can actually be explained quite reasonably from the standpoint of power and politics. The Department's key policy-making personnel, with the Secretary of Labor at the summit, are political appointees. Their LMRDA assignment puts them uncomfortably in the middle of conflict between powerless union insurgents and politically influential labor officials. Pulled in two directions, they often have gravitated toward the stronger pole.

The traditional role of the Labor Department requires it to cultivate amicable relations with the mainstream of the labor movement, which means its officialdom. Supervision of wages, hours, pensions, health and welfare; the gathering of assorted statistics; above all, the prevention of strikes by conciliation—all this and more demands rapport between labor union officials and D of L officials. There is no valid reason why the Labor Department should not serve the labor movement so long as the Department is not loaded with contradictory assignments. In contrast to its main function, the responsibility for enforcing Title IV pushes the Department toward conflict with labor leaders. The cause of that conflict is elemental. In the eyes of many labor leaders, hardly any act is more reprehensible, or a more dangerous form of lese majesty, than internal opposition, especially when that opposition is organized and effective. But if the Labor Department is to defend fair union elections, it must be willing to support the rights of precisely such "dangerous" insurgents. The threat of stolen elections normally comes not from rank and file dissidents but from those in power who are determined, come what may, to stay there.

When Congress passed the National Labor Relations Act back in the days of the New Deal, and needed an enforcement agency that could adjudicate disputes between unions and employers and remain independent of both, it chose not the Labor Department but a new agency, the National Labor Relations Board. In contradistinction, when it adopted the LMRDA, Congress turned Title IV enforcement over to the Department of Labor. By that decision, it cut the heart out of the law's provisions for fair union elections. Under political pressure to conciliate the labor movement's officialdom, the Labor Department can hardly defend wholeheartedly the rights of their internal union critics and oppositions.

The delicate subject of politics and power in Title IV enforcement has been noted in at least two scholarly studies. In January 1972 a *Yale Law Journal* survey directed by Professor Clyde W. Summers, entitled "Union Elections and the LMRDA: Thirteen Years of Use and Abuse," reported:

> There is a common perception among both attorneys for Title IV complainants and union counsel that "political influence" is brought to bear on this decision. Complainants and their attorneys tended to view this influence as being exerted in specific stances to forestall litigation—by the national union to protect an incumbent local officer, or by the AFL-CIO to defend a national official. It is, however, virtually impossible to evaluate or document such asserted political bias.
>
> Union attorneys suggested a systematic bias in favor of incumbents resulting from the fact that the Department, and specifically the Assistant Secretary for Labor-Management Relations, depends upon

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good relations with labor leaders in order to deal with them in labor-management disputes. While proof is difficult to obtain, it does not seem implausible to suspect that on occasion litigation to vindicate that statute may be sacrificed by the Department to preserve these relationships.

Four years later, in 1976, two Wayne State University research specialists pointed to the same persisting problem. In a report commissioned by the U.S. Department of Labor itself, Doris B. McLaughlin and Anita Schoomaker explained how the D of L's own field staff assigned to Title IV enforcement, most of whom are civil service employees, viewed some of the decisions of the Department's politically appointed policy-makers:

> Of all the field staff we interviewed—administrators, enforcement officers, Regional Solicitor's Office staff—just over 73 percent wondered if negative decisions (on complaints) might not be politically motivated. The top DOL officials are political appointees, they pointed out, and remain in office only so long as they make "politically right" decisions: i.e., consider the interests of the union leaders, who control contributions to campaign funds and may have an influence upon how the members vote in the country's elections.
>
> Again, citing all field office staff, just under 81 percent commented that, political motives aside, the top agency officials must be concerned with their effectiveness as guardians of industrial peace, and that that could conflict with their role as administrators of LMRDA. For example, if they are trying to persuade a union to settle a strike, what sort of position are they placed in if, at the same time, other members of that same agency are investigating an election complaint against the same union?
>
> All of the Compliance Officers we interviewed also wondered aloud whether or not the final decision not to pursue certain election complaints, particularly those against parent body elections, might not involve financial considerations. One enforcement officer, for example, told of a parent organization election that he clearly believed should have been rerun but was not because of the costs involved . . . .
>
> All of the Compliance Officers as well as two former National Office staff told us that they often feel that the National Office is more concerned with its relationship with the unión leaders than with honest elections and rank-and-file rights. ("National headquarters and the Internationals play footsies at the complainant's expense.") Three Compliance Officers who felt very keenly that their duty is to represent rank-and-file members' rights contended that, because of the close relationship between the National Office and top union leaders, the Area Offices and National Office work "at cross purposes." [From "The Impact of the Labor-Management Reporting and Disclosure Act of 1959 on International Union Organization and Operations," unpublished report in typescript, Department of Labor, page 89.]

What's Next?

DESPITE THE COMPLEXITIES, despite the politically implanted bias of the Labor Department and its lackadaisical enforcement record, Ed Sadlowski is far better off with the federal law on union democracy than without it. Before Landrum-Griffin, insurgents like Sadlowski were at the mercy of the officialdom and could quickly and quietly be dispatched. Now, with the law, they have a fighting chance, which is better than none. The road ahead is still bewildering. Sadlowski must prepare internal union appeals with meticulous attention to detail so that they are technically perfect, for the D of L will not consider any issue that he has not previously raised inside the union. When he gets to the Labor Department, he is presumably required by law only to make charges while the D of L follows through. But that is a myth. Actually, he must present hard evidence of violations, hoping to convince the Department that there were violations enough to affect the election outcome; and he will still have to exert pressure on the Department to sue in federal court. If the Labor Department turns him down, he will have to convince a federal judge not only that the Labor Department was wrong to dismiss his complaint—it has the right to be wrong—but that its decision was so irrational as to be arbitrary and capricious.

Ordinarily, these burdens are beyond the resources and talents of union members, so that the benefits of federal law for union elections remain an unattainable luxury. Sadlowski, however, is able to make a stand because he can count on a few liberals and civil libertarians, who support him just as they have supported other movements for social justice. Notable among them is Joseph Rauh, the splendid civil libertarian attorney who enabled the Miners to win their legal fight for democracy. That kind of support turns Sadlowski's quest for a fair election into a formidable demand. Against this background, we must assess the recent attacks by the Steelworkers leadership and other labor leaders against intervention by "outsiders." The experience of 18 years under the LMRDA has proven that, with help and encouragement from outside the labor movement, internal union democracy can thrive. But if this kind of sustenance were to be cut off, prospects again would be gloomy indeed. □

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Advertisement

A Public Service Message from the American Income Life Insurance Company—Executive offices, Waco, Texas—Bernard Rapoport, Chairman of the Board.

Progress

By Bernard Rapoport

Notes for a talk to be given at the MINNESOTA AFL-CIO Meeting—Hotel Kahler, Minneapolis, Minnesota, Tuesday, October 5, 1976.

In a discussion one day with a most interesting person, I expressed some of my concerns about our technological society and its thwarting of our societal commitment to what we commonly refer to as the Work Ethic.

Slogans such as "MACHINES WORK, MEN THINK" deprecate work and provide for an attitude that almost demeans people who are in any endeavor ordinarily associated with the service industries, or almost any other form of manual labor.

A century ago, Henry George told us:

> "Though custom has dulled us to it, it IS a strange and unnatural thing that men who wish to labor, in order to satisfy their wants, cannot find the opportunity. . . . 'There can be no real scarcity of work . . . until human wants are all satisfied.'"

I am certain that if a poll were taken it would reveal that 99 percent of all Americans could accept this as a concept in which there would be total agreement.

I'd like to review with you what our course of action for the past hundred years has been, through which I hope to convince you that we give lipservice to this precept, and our institutional thrusts have produced an opposite result.

After World War II we had a 4 percent rate of unemployment. While there was a little complaining, it was assumed that this was acceptable. Today we have a 7½ to 8 percent unemployment rate and, though a bit uncomfortable, it appears that we are going to accommodate to this. I was amazed to hear during a presidential debate President Ford talk about the fact that we had more employed people today than ever before in our history. In a so-called Democratic capitalistic society, if our standard is to be how good things are rather than how this society can provide a decent quality of living for all of its members, then, perhaps, we are in more serious trouble than we know.

Every society needs Capital: its components are Land and Natural Resources—and, oh yes, Labor too. Then we get into that esoteric or mysterious thing called "productivity of labor." I want to dwell for a moment on this latter item.

Let us say that a farmer has a thousand acres of land and that it would take a complement of twenty people to do all of the things necessary to run the farm efficiently. For the purpose of this discussion, let us overlook the obvious inequality in the fact that the farmer gets for his product what the market will pay; those with whom he has to negotiate are generally monopolists, and so the bargaining is terribly unfair.

Now comes the Congress and the Executive Branch, and they say to the manufacturer of tractors: "If you will invest money in building a tractor factory we will give you a 10 percent investment credit; in other words, you are going to get a tax break for buying new machinery (generally labor-saving and/or job displacing) to build these tractors." The Government needs money with which to provide services, so this particular company isn't going to be paying its fair share of tax, thus shifting the burden to the mass of Americans. . . . As all of us generally pursue that course which is in our self-interest, the manufacturer takes advantage of this tax break.

Now comes the farmer. He can reduce the number of people necessary to run his farm by perhaps ten by utilizing the tractor; not only that, he receives certain tax advantages for purchasing it. What is the net result? Ten less people have jobs.

You make this point with so many folks and their retort is: Well, do you want to stop progress? I don't know how to define the word, but if progress means that as the result of building something big or monumental that it results in misery for millions, I just can't believe that the person who invented the word had this in mind.

(To be continued in the next issue.)

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